MEDITATIONS
UPON THE XLII. PSALME.

BY

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TO THE READER.

IT is the Apoſtles rule, *Be ready alwayes to give an anſwer to every man, that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you, with meekneſſe and feare.* The multitude of my thoughts thereof, have conſtrained me to give ſome publicke teſtimony, whereby to abſolve my ſelfe from any finiſter abuſe of that retired privacy which I have hitherto injoyed. I chuſe rather to have my life embrightened by uſe, than conſumed by the ruſt

1. Pet. 3. 15.

ruſt of eaſe. There is no kind of life ſo meane and unworthy as that of the voluptuous man, who filleth himſelfe with vaine delights, as with the wind, and hath no other pleaſure than that which is common to the creatures, yea more proper to them than unto man; not deſerving to be called a life, for ſuch as live in pleaſure are dead while they live. Other profeſſions, as they are commendable in themſelves, ſo being rightly uſed, they may become helpfull unto us, in making our calling and election ſure. There is a bleſſing beſtowed upon the Peace-maker, which laboureth to deſtroy that bitter roote of diſſention, and to eſtabliſh

ſtabliſh goodwil among men: But let him conſider how miſerable an eſtate he is in, though hee hath beene an inſtrument of concord, and a meanes of charity, if hee wants this inward peace of a good conſcience; and the perfect aſſurance that God is reconciled unto him in Chriſt Ieſus. The Ruler muſt remember how inexcuſable he is, if he condemneth himſelfe, in doing the ſame things wherein hee judgeth another: How can hee puniſh ſwearing and drunkenneſſe in other men, when himſelfe doth deſerve to be ſmitten five or ſix times, even till hee bee conſumed, with the arrowes of Gods vengeance, becauſe of his tranſ-

greſſions ? The Advocate that ſeekes for the temporall benefit of another man, with ſuch vehemency, may be put in minde to ſue for his owne ſpirituall good, with greater importunity : If hee bee ſo diligent to obtaine a corruptible reward, then hee ought to bee much more carefull to obtaine an incorruptible crowne, which is more precious than gold or ſilver; being given unto us by Chriſt our Mediator, who pleadeth for us, and in whom wee alſo have boldneſſe and acceſſe with confidence unto the throne of grace. The Soule-phyſitian muſt firſt heale himſelfe, before he can cure the infirmities of other men: And his chiefe care and feare muſt

must bee, leſt that by any meanes, having preached unto others, he himſelfe ſhould be a caſt away: Thus ſhould the ſoule bee lifted up in all our employments. But the common courſe of the world is to lanch forth into the deepe, not having Chriſt to bee their Pilot; where they are exceedingly toſſed by ſtormy winds, and mighty tempeſts, and in danger to fall into quick-ſands, or at leaſt to bee prevented by the winter of ſickneſſe and death, ſo that their voyage is with much hurt and dammage; and ſometime they make ſhip-wracke of faith and a good conſcience. Onely the true beleever hath arrived at the faire havens of bleſ-

bleſſednesse and tranquility: Hee onely is rapt up to ſuch an height, that hee is exempted from the harmfull violence of thunder and raine. His underſtanding is not over-clouded with darke ignorance: Hee is not carried about with every winde of inconſtancy, But having found by comfortable experience, that it is good being upon this holy hill; hee hath there pitched his tent, and fixed his habitation. From whence God ſuffereth him to looke downe, upon the Gomorrah of this rebellious people, this ſinfull world: The cry of whoſe grievous ſinnes, being very great, doth aſcend up like a vapour, and will cauſe the

the Lord to ſhowre downe his judgements.

The good man that depends upon God alone, and is ſatisfied from himſelfe, having full contentment in the portion received, is to be eſteemed of all men moſt happy. Were not the deceitfull heart like that bag with holes (whereof the Prophet ſpeaketh) which can never be filled, this competent eſtate, for which Agur prayed, and for which we ought to give thankes, might bring abundant ſatisfaction, and cauſe us to ſeeke more devoutly for heavenly bleſſings. The chiefe contentment I have found in framing this ſmall worke, may be expreſſed in the words of Iacob, though with

Pro. 14. 14.

Haggai 1. 6.

with plainer truth, The Lord thy God brought it to my hand: My speciall benefit which I intend, is to bind my selfe to a vigilant observation of those things, which I have thought meet and needfull to prescribe unto others: If hereby any glory doth redound unto God, I have obtained the prize for which I runne: As for any fame unto my selfe, I neither deserve nor expect it: And though it were never so well beautified by Art, and adorned with Rhetorick, I would shake it off as the dust, and tread it under foot, rather than be seduced with fond affectation of empty praise. I regard not mans day, nor will I hearken unto the voyce of man,

when

when (as I hope) God himſelfe hath called thereunto.

From my Study at Grundesburgh in Suffolke.

WILLIAM BLOYS.

PSALME XLII.

AS the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee, O God.

2 My ſoule thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appeare before God?

3 My teares have beene my meate, day and night, while they continually ſay unto me, Where is thy God?

4 When I remember theſe things, I poure out my ſoule in me; for I had gone with the multitude: I went with them to the houſe of God, with the

voyce of joy and praiſe, with a multitude that kept holy-day.

5 Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted in me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him for the helpe of his countenance.

6 O my God, my ſoule is caſt downe within me; therefore will I remember thee from the land of Iordane, and of the Hermonites from the hill Miſſar.

7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noyſe of thy water-ſpouts: all thy waves, and thy billowes are gone over me.

8 Yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſſe in the day time: and in the night his ſong ſhall be with me, and my

my prayer unto the God of my life.

9 *I will ſay unto God, My rocke, why haſt thou forgotten me? Why goe I mourning becauſe of the oppreſsion of the enemie?*

10 *As with a ſword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me, while they ſay daily unto me, Where is thy God?*

11 *Why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoule? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

MEDITATIONS VPON THE XLII. PSALM.

TO compare Scripture, with Scripture, it is neither safe nor convenient, all Scripture being given by inspiration of God. Betwixt the holy Scripture and the works of other men, there can bee no comparison: All other writings have either withered, and beene consumed by the worme of time, like those bookes that Salomon wrote of trees; or have bin plucked up by the roots,

Deſunt nonnulla.

Deſunt plurima.

through the malice of ſome tyrant; or if ſtill extant, many branches are falne off, diverſe parts are wanting; Or laſtly, though entire and whole, yet are they (as the Authors themſelves) ſubject to infirmity; being like the tree of Knowledge of good and evill; therein wee may know ſome good to be collected, and ſome evill of errour to be reformed, or ignorance to be pitied, or ſin the worſt of evils to be avoyded. Onely this booke (which alone deſerves that title) though in part moſt ancient, doth ſtill continue, & one word thereof ſhall not periſh: being like that tree of Life, whereof if wee eate, we ſhall live for ever.

The

The booke of Pſalms hath alwayes beene in great eſtimation; being as a ſpirituall library of moſt kinds of doctrine fit for meditation; a common treaſury of all good learning; a rich magazin furniſhed with ſpirituall armour to withſtand any aſſault of our Adverſary: The which was ſo frequently cited by Chriſt & his Diſciples, who derive not fewer than threeſcore and foure teſtimonies from two and forty ſeverall Pſalmes. Herein wee may ſee an abridgement of the hiſtory of the Church, even from the Creation, untill thoſe times; and many prophecies of thoſe things which ſhould come to paſſe in ſucceeding ages. Here is

the Law, and the judgements thereof, when hee relateth Gods dealing with the wicked, and the confusion of the ungodly: And here is the Gospel and the sweet comforts thereof, when he sheweth Gods mercy and love towards his children. So that it is most usefull, as for the Church in generall, which hath appointed a more frequent use of this than of any other portion of Scripture: So likewise for every one in particular, and that in every estate. Many of these Psalms doe resemble the life of a Christian; for though in the former verses there is mention of sorrow and trouble, and manifold afflictions; yet in the conclusion there is consola-

conſolation, and thankeſgiving. And the ayme and deſire is ſo to doe the will of our heavenly Father upon earth, as it is done in heaven, wherein wee may heare a voyce, like that of the Angels, ſaying; Bleſſing and glory, and wiſedome and thankeſgiving, and honour and power and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. But when all is ſaid that can bee, the heart of a good Chriſtian will indite more than the pen of a ready Writer in the praiſe of theſe Pſalmes; who in his paſſage through the valley of this world doth make them a wel of comfort. Then may wee abhorre the cenſure of that evill Angel Politian (whoſe

Deformitas corporis turpitudine certabat in anti.

heart was worſe than appeared in his outward deformity) foming out his owne ſhame by preferring Pindars Odes before Davids Pſalms, droſſe and iron before the pureſt gold.

Ferrea epitheta Pindari.

The chiefe Author of theſe Pſalms, was David the King; for that is the title which is given to him alone among many Kings, as being an example unto them all. Nor did thoſe women intend him leſſe honour in ſaying that he had ſlaine his tenne thouſands; which is the juſt ſum whereby the name of Emperour hath ſince beene deſerved; Him God tooke from following the Ewes great with young, to feede Iacob his people, whom hee fed in the

Mat. 3.

1. Sam. 18. 7.

Pſal. 78. 71.

the integrity of his heart, and brought them to greene paſtures, plenty of outward bleſſings, and ſtill waters, the pure worſhip of God and meanes of ſalvation; And like a good ſheapherd he was willing to lay downe his life for his people, when he ſpeaketh, *Let thine hand, O Lord God, be on me, but as for theſe ſheepe, what have they done?* 1. Chro. 21. 17

And yet this precious Diamond, though he were made the more eminent and illuſtrious by his predeceſſor Saul, who was as a foile unto him, yet was he not without his flaw and infirmity. You ſee him upon the roofe of his houſe, which proſpect was another gallery for his ſight to walke in, where he burned in

in luſt after her that waſhed her ſelfe. But in his repen-
Pſal. 6.6. tance hee bathed himſelfe in his teares, wherewith he wa-
tered his couch. You ſee him numbring his people, ma-
Pſal. 40.12. king fleſh his arme; But after hee doth number his ſinnes, and confeſſe his iniquities to bee more than the haires of his head: None ever ſear-ched deeper in his foundati-on of ſorrow, nor reared an higher building of comfort unto his own ſoule: So pow-erfull was his repentance, which maketh thoſe things that were, as if they had ne-ver beene, that by Bathſheba her ſelfe, hee obtained that ſon which did ſucceed him in the Throne: So great was the love that hee received from

from his people, though unſtable as water, that hee was eſteemed as the light of Iſrael, worth many thouſands of them; And the men of Iuda and Iſrael ſtrove who ſhould have the great'ſt right in him. Such grace and favour did he find before the Lord, that he was eſteemed a man after his own heart, moſt eminent for his zeale, moſt excellent for his praiſing of God. I can hardly deſiſt from commendation of him, but I heare him ſpeaking as the Angel to Iohn, Doe it not, for I am thy fellow-ſervant: So that I aſcribe all glory to God, who gave ſuch great gifts to the ſons of men. His ſepulchre continued after Chriſts time, his fame and renowne ſhall

2. Sam 21. 17. & 18, 1. & 19. 41.

Act. 2. 29.

shall endure unto the worlds end.

The occasion of this Psalme wee may safely beleeve to bee Absalom, who, like as Domitian sought to defraud his father the warlike Vespasian, of the governement, And his brother Titus the delicacie of mankind, that should succeed, So hee did endevour to obtaine the Kingdome from the valiant David his Father, and to prevent his brother Salomon the wisest of men: Using the worst meanes to fulfill his desire; His pretence was, that there was none appointed to do justice; A true complaint in him, that found so much mercie: And by his outward shew of humility & courte-

Cerialis fidem tentavit, an sibi imperium traditurus foret, Tacit.

courteſie, like a ſerpent going upon the belly, he ſtole away the hearts of the people. O Viper, O generation of Vipers, thus to deſtroy the parent of your country; whoſe greateſt revenge for this your treacherie, would have been to have ſuffered you to accompliſh your unlawfull deſires; And (as the ancient manner of Kings was, when their ſubjects provoked them by their evill carriage) as the greateſt puniſhment to have forſaken his dominion: Had their treaſon beene legitimated by the ſucceſſe, what an happy alteration had they made? There was none to be praiſed like Abſalom for beauty, and Abſalom to bee praiſed for nothing but his beauty,

Nil rex maius minari malè parentibus poſſet, quam ut abiret è regno. Senec.

beauty As their first King was higher by the head than the people; so the chiefe praise & height of this King had been his head; the haire whereof, he was more fit to weigh, than to guide the ballance of justice. Such as was the case of David, such is the case of every one of us: Hee complaines, My son, which came out of my bowels, seeketh my life: That which commeth out of us seeketh our life, and would defeate us of the kingdome we have, and of that we hope for. And as to Absalom there joyned Achitophel, whose counsell was as the Oracle of God; so with our corruptions, there doth joyn Satan, whose counsels for a long time were Oracles;

2 Sam. 16. 22.

Mat. 15. 19.

Oracles: Both of them cruell murtherers in their advice and ſuggeſtions. In theſe extremities David finds favour in the eyes of the Lord, and is compaſſionate towards his ſonne; Not like Manlius, who being over-juſt, cauſed his ſonne to be executed for fighting againſt the enemy, though not without victory, yet without authority: Nor like that Senatour that gave command to have his ſonne Fulvius put to death for joyning with a traytor: Nor yet like Saul, who would have put Ionathan to death as being too good a ſonne to live under ſo bad a father: But he ſhewing himſelfe to be as naturally a father of pity, as of this unnaturall ſon, commanded

Summum Ius.

Hiſtor deliga ad palum, Liv. lib. 8.

Quem retractum ex itinere parens necari iuſſit, Saluſt.

2.Sam. 18.5. manded the Captaines for his ſake to deale gently with the young man.

If wee take this Pſalme to bee propheticall, it may bee referred unto the Iewes; and that in a twofold eſtate: Either as they were captives at Babylon, where being reproched and oppreſſed by their enemies, they deſire to bee reſtored to Ieruſalem, that they may worſhip the Lord; Or elſe being in a more cruell bondage while they ſerve the luſts of their owne hearts, (their darkneſſe and blindneſſe being worſe than that of Zedekiah) it pleaſeth the Lord, the fulneſſe of the Gentiles being come in, to open their eyes, & mollifie their hearts,

Rom 11.10. 25.

and

and to cauſe them to ſeeke and ſue for the meanes of ſalvation. If thou art not ſatisfied in thoſe former explications, but doſt apprehend the aime and intention of the Pſalme to be more generall, I will ſpeake that to thy conſolation which Nathan doth to the terrour of David, Thou art the man; who being wearied with daily reproaches of the wicked, and heavy laden with the manifold afflictions of this life, doſt deſire to depart, and be with Chriſt, where is fulneſſe of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.

Here we ſee the cariage of the godly in time of trouble how far it doth differ from that of other men: The Lord doth

Non eſt tranquillitas: Malacia eſt. Senec.

Apathia etiam ipſis Stoicis improbata. Gelli.

doth not require that wee ſhould be as the dead ſea, never to be moved by any tempeſt, But in all our diſtreſſes to be ſupported with inward comfort, expecting a joyfull deliverance; as our Author doth in this place, in aſſurance that he ſhall yet praiſe the Lord his God. Whereas other men are ready to ſinke, and be ſwallowed up in any tryall. Cicero, how did hee droup and wither in the time of his ſuffering, as if his ſoule alſo had beene baniſhed out of his body; not being able to ſpeake one word to perſwade himſelfe? And Cato ſo often magnified by Seneca, (whoſe works are fraught with the doctrine of deſparation) as if wiſedome had

Plutarchus.

dyed

dyed (or rather had killed it selfe) with him; with what poverty of spirit did he surrender himselfe? That his violent fury, and outrageous madnesse, how is it applauded as a worke of liberty and glory? And yet formerly upon another occasion, hee himselfe was able to speake that there was a place of horror reserved after death, for such as were evil: And it was their owne opinion, that only they could passe into the place of blisse whom God did call thereunto. But the estate of Christians is otherwise, who are so farre from being overwhelmed by crosses and afflictions, that like trees, exercised by the stormy wind, they grow to bee better

Iob 12. 2.

Hirtius in bell. Alex. Senec. epist. 13. 24. 70. &c. & in lib. de Bon. vir.

Diverso itinere malos à bonis loca tetra habere. Salust.

Si cum Deus istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit. &c. Macrob.

better rooted and eſtabliſhed in all graces, And doe flouriſh like the Palme-tree; who not being ſurcharged with thoſe burthens impoſed upon them, at laſt obtaine a victorious triumph.

Pſal. 92. 12.

Non deorſum palma cedit. &c Gellius.

In our approach to the entrance of the Pſalm, wherein David ſpeakes to the Lord, wee may ſee the excellency and dignity of prayer, which is a ſoveraigne remedy for every trouble. So long as we ſeeke to hide and conceale our ſorrow, wee carry a fire in our boſome which will burne us. The winde being pent and reſtrained within the bowels of the earth, what overthrowes and deſolations are wrought thereby? But if with Hannah out of the

1. Sam. 1. 15.

the abundance of our griefe we can powre out our ſoules before the Lord, ſpreading our miſery and neceſſity before him, as Hezekiah did the letter of Senacherib, the Lord will fill us with comfort, and make a way for us to eſcape out of all our tryalls; Then doe not thou keepe ſilence leſt thy bones be conſumed, but diſcover thy diſeaſe, that ſo thou maiſt bee healed.

Si operam meduantis expectas, oportet ut vulnus detegas tuum. Boet.

VERSE 1.

As the Hart panteth after the water-brookes, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee O God.

THe Hart panteth after the water-brookes, as being unable to endure heat, which

Quibuſdam anni temporibus incredibili ardore aquas expetit. Calvin.

Aquas ore tenus subit. Iul. Scal.

Plini.

Pierius.

Festinat notos subito se mergere in amnes. Bargæus.
ÆElian Lib. cap. 15.
Occultarque undis præter caput Bar.
Cerva in palude delituit. Gell.
Pluvio cum forte secundo, desueret. Virgil.
Novas vires colligit. Calv.
Fragrantem & totc de corpore ponit odorem. Bargæus.

which to prevent it will wade into the depth: Or else there being deadly fude betweene the Hart and the Serpents, when shee hath devoured any of them shee desireth the waters to coole her; Or being stung by them shee hasteneth to the Rivers where shee obtaineth her medecine. Or Lastly, being chased by the Huntsmen, shee taketh foyle, using the water for a refuge, being very expert in swimming; And that her thirst being abated, her strength may bee renewed; And shee being cleansed by her washing may bee free from the sent, and so avoyd the danger. For these and the like causes doth the Hart desire the water: But our reason

reaſon to pant after the Lord, the fountaine of life, is much greater; which doth not only cleanſe us from the outward leproſie of the body as Iordane did Naaman, healing all our diſeaſes, but from the inward leproſie of the ſoule, purifying us from all our ſinnes, and corruptions: Neither can wee pretend that this precious water is hidden and ſealed up from us; For this Fountaine is open for Iudah and Ieruſalem to waſh in: And the water thereof is ſtirred not by one alone, but by many Angels; And that not at certaine ſeaſons onely, but as well out of ſeaſon, as in ſeaſon; That ſo, not onely he that ſteppeth in firſt, but how many ſoever

Veteres ad purificationem non quavis aqua contentos, ſed vivam, &c. Tirinch.

Iohn 5. 4.

ver ſhall ſtep in, may be healed of whatſoever diſeaſes they have: Wee are often called upon by the preaching of the Word, to waſh and be cleane; And the danger is great if wee neglect it; For unleſſe wee bee thus waſhed we have no part with Chriſt. Then let us cleanſe not our feet and hands onely, (as in ancient times they did daily being made uncleane by labour;) nor, as Peter addeth, our feet, our hands and head; all which are ready inſtruments of unrighteouſneſſe, & therefore have great need to bee purged; But ſeeing from the crowne of the head to the ſole of the foot there is no ſoundneſſe in us, let us waſh the whole man, and make

John 13.8.

Brachia & crura quotidie abluebant. Senec.

Iſay 1.6.16.

make us cleane; not with the Phariſee the outſide onely, but as Chriſt came by water and by bloud, ſo both the outward & inward part muſt bee made cleane. It was a great complaint of Phyſitians, that they never found their Patients more oppoſite and impatient, than when they did forbid them the uſe of baths, ſo great was the delight and contentment that they received therby though pernicious unto them: But here being a fountaine able to ſave us, & make us ſound, if we will come unto it; and yet how few there bee that will make uſe thereof. Are we not more ſtrange and unwilling than ever that Leper was to obey the Prophet,

Nunquam difficilius obſequentes ægros habuêre olim medici, quam, &c. Cauſabon.

that badde him wash seven times? Like those which wallowed in the burning sand, or walked naked in the sun to drye up the moysture of their bodies, we had rather bee scorched, and inflamed by the heate of our lusts, than thus to bee cleansed from all sinne and pollution: In the old Law a fountaine wherein there was plenty of water should cõtinue clean though any uncleane thing did fall thereinto; Surely this Fountaine doth not onely continue holy and pure, but will also make our sinfull soules to be cleane, if they be washed therein. Then leade us O Lord to this living fountaine, and wash us throughly from our iniquities, that wee may

Non & tepic is conuolue. corpus arcuta Sammot ue. Exod. lat. 10.

Leuit. 15. 16.

may bee preſented before thee without ſpot and blemiſh.

The reſemblance which is here uſed is very fit, in regard of that warre and hatred betweene the Hart and the Serpent. The firſt and greateſt wound wee ever received, was by the Serpent; the poyſon whereof doth ſtill abide within us: Since which time there hath beene, and ever ſhall be enmity betweene us and the Serpent Satan himſelfe, And the ſeed of the Serpent, both wicked men which are his ſpawne, and our ſinnes and vices which come from him, and are as dangerous to the ſoule as the biting of Serpents was to the gainſaying Iſraelites, bring-

Gen. 3.

Numb. 21.&

ing men to that fire which never can be quenched: In this eſtate of our warfare, we are to pant after the Lord; and if our heele bee bruiſed, as in the originall of the Goſpel wee are forewarned to expect it: If that wicked one doth touch us, and wee bee hurt by the malice and ſubtilty of that old Serpent, we are to crie unto the Lord to deliver us from this body of death; and if wee overcome, we muſt give thankes unto God through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.

Rom. 7.

The reaſons are divers, why David or any faithfull man may be compared unto the Hart: This creature doth continue in the uſe of that meate which was given unto

Gen. 1. 30.

it

it in the beginning, eating every greene herbe: And a Chriſtian hath the ſame heavenly food and nouriſhment for his ſoule which Adam had in the eſtate of innocencie; it is his meate to doe the will of his heavenly Father, and to contemplate his glorious workes. The Harts keepe together in herds, not alone like beaſts that devoure the prey, and are helpefull to one another in ſwimming: So there is a communion betweene thoſe that are godly, who ſeeke not their owne good, but the good of others, bearing one anothers burthen; and being ſpirituall, they reſtore ſuch as are overtaken in any fault. The Hart hath alwayes

Metuſque congrega. Stat. Agmina cervi, Pulverulenta fuga glomerant. Virgil.

Maria tranant capita imponentes precedentium clunibus. Plini.

In volueri tamen fiducia cursu Stat.

Cornibus armatur trepidandus; quis tamen illum &c. Natal. Comes.

Nunquid oris lupum persequitur?

beene the emblem of speed: So a Christian doth make haste unto the Lord, and desireth to runne the race, that hee may obtaine the price. The Hart, though hee be armed, yet doth not use the same, either for to harme other creatures, or to defend himselfe: So a Christian, though he hath strength and power, yet he had rather suffer than offer an injury; and being smitten, hee will not turne againe, unlesse it bee in obedience, as he is commanded, that by patient enduring, hee may heape coales upon his enemies head. The Hart is pursued and followed; so a Christian is persecuted; oppression is as the Genius of piety, which ever attends

attends upon it. But our comfort is, wee know the world hated Chriſt before it hated us; and he was tempted that hee might ſuccour us in all our temptations, whereof this is none of the leaſt. There is no beaſt that hath more enemies than the Hart; For beſide the Serpents, the Lion, the Tigre, the Wolfe and Dogs, and the like ſeeke to deſtroy it, and a more cruell enemy than all theſe, Man: So a Chriſtian hath many enemies that compaſſe him about, and riſe up againſt him. And as the Hart is not killed like the ſheepe that is led to the ſlaughter, but there is much ſport and pleaſure in the death thereof: So there is great delight

Sic Cerva leonem. Ovid. & Stat.
Ceu tigride cerva Hircana cum preſſa tremit. Sil. Ital.
Cerva cruentis circumventa lupis. Statius & Livius.
Omnium beſtiarum inimiciſſimus homo ſui. Scalig. in Arat.

and contentment to the wicked in the overthrow of those that are good. How did the heart of Herodias dance within her for joy, that Iohn was put to death? with whose head they sported as with a Tennis-bal. How did the fire wherein the Martyrs were burned, warme the very hearts of their persecutors? unto whom the light thereof seemed more glorious than the Sunne in the firmament. As the Hart seeketh reliefe from man when it is distressed, and is deluded by a pleasant sound, and readily driven into the nets and taken: so there is nothing more easie than to deceive a good man, who many times reposeth confidence in those that

Confugiunt ad homines. Plini.

Cantu mulcetur animal stupidum. Iul. Scal.

Aut puniceæ sæptum formidine pœnæ. Virgil.

that prove treacherous unto him, in charity believing all things, hoping all things, not having that worldly wiſdome that others have. But as the beſt and ſureſt refuge of the Hart, when his might is empaired, and hee beginneth to deſcend and bee ſpent, then to proffer and deſire the river; ſo it is thy wiſedome in affliction early to ſeeke unto the Lord, who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction, and ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things, ſo that thy youth is renewed like the Eagles. In the time of our neceſſity there is no helpe for us, but onely in the name of the Lord. All other ſuccour & reliefe will prove as weake and impotent as the

Pſal. 103. 4. 5.

the broken reed of Egypt was to the Israelites, or the hornes of the Altar to Ioab, where wee may be taken and utterly destroyed. If we trust to riches, we provide for our selves, as the rich man did, that bade his soule live at ease, because hee had plenteous increase of the fruits of the earth; whereas the soule of man liveth not by bread, & therefore being famished, may that night bee taken from him. If we trust to wisdome and policy, when the houre of darknesse commeth, wee may with Ahitophel, set our house in order, but what mansion have wee provided, whereinto our soules may bee received? In the time of our sicknesse if wee

Luke 12.19.

we ſeeke to the helpe of man alone, as Aſa did, wee may well expect the ſame ſucceſſe that he had. If we thinke our houſe to be our caſtle to defend us from ſtorme and violence, know, that Iobs heire had as good an habitation. Iob 1.
How ſoone may wee with Nebuchadnezzar be driven away & expoſed to the dew of heaven? Miſerable comforters are they all; for who is God, ſave the Lord? but let my ſoule long after thee O God. Obſerve the benefit wee have by affliction, when the winter of perſecution and trouble doth kindle our affection, and ſtirre up in us a deſire and appetite towards heavenly things. If poverty was to bee liked becauſe Dan. 4. 33. Pſal. 18. 31.

cauſe it ſhewed the fidelity & conſtancy of our friends, then may we eſteeme this to be a great commodity, that wee have by our affliction, diſcovering not other mens, but which more neerely concernes us, our owne hearts. It makes us ſee our poore & weake eſtate, and to ſeeke for ſtrength and a rich ſupply of heavenly graces. Our want doth cure our wantonneſſe, and calleth us, who are troubled about many things, to ſeeke that one thing needfull which is yet wanting. Before wee were afflicted wee went aſtray like the Prodigall, and walked in our owne inventions; But when wee come to ſuffer hardſhip, and are ready to dye for hunger,

wee begin to thinke of returning to our Father. Our calamities lying heavy upon us doe awaken us out of the ſleepe of ſecurity, and are as beneficiall as the mighty tempeſt was unto Ionah, bringingus to true confeſſion of our ſins, to fervent prayer unto the Lord our God, who doth reſtore us unto the joy of his ſalvation. If our tryalls have this happy and comfortable effect, wee may ſafely conclude, It was good for us wee were afflicted, as David here, who being hunted as a Partridge in the mountain, is thereby excited with the more vehemency to ſeeke after the Lord.

Et ſua quemque advigilare fibi iuſsit fortuna premendo. Manil.

To ſeeke after the Lord wee have great encouragement,

ment, who is a God nigh at hand, ready to heare and deliver us in the day of trouble, who is found of those that sought not after him, that asked not for him. Then doubtlesse will he in mercy reveale himselfe unto us if we cry unto him: And our extremity is Gods oportunity; when all other helpe is vaine, then we see it to bee the Lords right hand that our soule is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Then we are bound for ever to be thankefull unto the Lord who saveth us out of all our troubles: Then we are taught to put our whole confidence in him, having tasted and seene how good the Lord is, in assurance that wee shall not want

want any good thing if wee ſeeke him. The ungodly are not ſo, but are like the chaffe which the winde driveth away, having no harbour of ſafety, being more deſtitute than any bruit beaſt; The foxes have holes, the conyes have rockes, the Hart deſires the river; no creature but hath ſome place of ſhelter when it is diſtreſſed, whereby it is relieved: But theſe men though they have beene unjuſt with the Steward, yet wanting his providence, have not any houſe whereinto they may be received; living within the reach of Gods might, out of the protection of his love: Being outlawed from his favour and cuſtody, they may feare with that fugitive,

Luke 16.4.

Eucherius ad Valerian.

Gen. 4. gitive and vagabond Cain that every one that findeth them ſhall ſlay them. When the ſound of Gods juſtice ſhall bee more terrible than the voyce of thunder, and their owne guilty conſcience like lightening ſhall ſtrike them with horrour and amazement, will they with that unworthy Emperour which hid himſelfe under the bed, ſeeke a covert to keepe them from the preſence of the Almighty? No, their nakedneſſe and ſhame will then appeare to God & themſelves. Therefore acquaint thy ſelfe with the wayes of the Lord, ſeeke him while he may be found, let thy heart be fixed and prepared, that though at midnight there

Ad maiora tonitrua & fulgura, ſub lectum ſe condere ſolebat, Caligula. Sueton.

Mat. 25. 6.

there be a cry made, though thy danger and trouble bee both great and ſodaine, thou maiſt with the wiſe virgins bee received into the favour & tuition of the moſt high.

Art thou oppreſſed and diſquieted by an evill ſonne, who in ſtead of fulfilling his name or thy hope in being the Fathers peace, proves contrary like Abſalom the Fathers war, ſeeking to thruſt thee forward unto thine end, and deſires thy death though hee received his life from thee? who would willingly joyne with that diſciple which in vaine asked leave to goe bury his Father, as if the greateſt part of his duty conſiſted in his diligence about that laſt office? Thereby

Eucherius.

Quis non patriſmo ſupremum diem, ut innocens ſit, optat &c. Senec. Quid enim maius dare numina poſſint. Iuven. Mat. 8. 21.

by thou art put in minde of thy former disobedience unto the Father of spirits. Surely this wounded David most when his sonne rebelled against him, the remembrance of his rebellion against the great King, with whom he warred in the murther of Uriah. Also doth thy son greedily desire an earthly inheritance, and art thou careless and negligent in seeking for a crowne of life, whereof thou canst never bee depriued? No, rather upon experience that all things are vexation of spirit, and those of thine owne house thy greatest enemies, be thou prouoked with the more zeale and vehemency of affection to pant after the Lord. This obser-

obſervation I ſhould willingly have paſſed, as Solon did to make a Law againſt parricides, hoping there were none ſuch; but that a wiſer than Solon or Salomon himſelfe, hath foretold that children ſhall riſe againſt their parents. Mat. 10. 21.

Art thou perſecuted by ſome cruell Nimrod, ſome mighty hunter, who chaſeth thee ſore, and hunteth thy ſteps, ſo that thou art become like an Hart without ſtrength before the purſuer? (as the Prophet ſpeaketh) Then, as the Hart panteth after the river, ſo let thy ſoule pant after the Lord. The Iſraelites being diſtreſſed by Pharaoh, that followed them, cryed unto the Lord, and ſaw his ſalvation, Lam. 1. 6. & 4. 18 & 3. 52.

ſalvation, the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left, but covered their enemies, and like that river Kiſhon ſwept them all away: When thou art in a great ſtraite, call upon the Lord, who knoweth how to deliver thoſe that are his; and thou maiſt ſee thy deſire upon thine enemies, even that which thou moſt deſireſt, their converſion. Being ſore vexed by ſome bloudy minded man, who doth breath out threatnings and ſlaughter, compare thine eſtate with that of Gods people purſued by the men of Ai, who being full of malice followed Iſrael, and perceived not that ambuſh which was laid againſt them, whereby

Iudg. 5. 21.

Act. 9. 1. Ioſh. 8.

by their city was ſet on fire, and themſelves overcome. Doth thine enemy ſeeke after thy life or thy good name? Would he hurt thee with the ſharpe ſword of Eſau, or the bitter words of Iſhmael? call upon God as Ioſhuah did, who will give thee a glorious deliverance: In the meane while hee that hateth thee doth not diſcern how powerfull that enemy is which lyeth in waite againſt him, by whom his tongue is ſet on fire (as Saint Iames ſpeaketh) in curſing, and his heart enraged by anger and envy, ſo that he is utterly confounded and overthrowne.

Such an enemy is not to be feared, whoſe ayme and power

power doth extend no further than to kill the body; But there is another more dreadfull enemy that seeketh to destroy both body and soule in hell, against whom wee must implore the helpe of the Lord. He it is that goeth to & fro in the earth and walketh up and downe in it; having the whole world for his foreſt, wherein hee hunteth after us: who is not satisfied with our bloud, which he hunteh after, being a murtherer from the beginning. And as hunters in ancient times were clad in white garments; so he can transforme himselfe into an Angell of light, using any shape and disguise that he may deceive us; dealing therein like this our

Antiqui Venatores albis vestibus incluti. Iul. Scal.

2. Cor. 11. 14.

our Abſalom, who tooke his brother Amnon in a ſnare that he had ſet for him, and killed him. And now by chaſe and purſuite he hopeth to take David his father. So doth Satan ſet ſnares and ginnes that hee may bring us to deſtruction: And how many doth he take by preſumption? If by that meanes hee cannot prevaile, then as a roaring Lyon which ſeeketh whom hee may devoure, by terrour hee would invelope us in the pit of deſperation: He himſelfe being maſter of the game, with the helpe of his aſſaſſinates in that bloudy worke did aſſault our bleſſed Saviour, whom the Pſalmiſt compareth to the Hart of the morning, who was rowzed

2. Sam. 13. 28.

Ingentem clamore premes ad retia cervum. Virgil.

1. Pet. 5. 8.

Pſal 22. inſcription.

early in the morning (as hee was from his birth by Herod) and chased all his life long: And at last, early in the morning, assoone as it was day, many dogs compassed him, and he was stricken and pierced & wounded for our transgressions; being as the goate that was offered, that we might escape damnation. So that now though wee bee as an army of Harts, weake and timerous, yet having the Lyon of the tribe of Iudah to be the Captaine of our salvation, from him we receive strength, courage and safety: For as the Hart royall escapeth being chased by some Prince, so our soule shall be defended when we are pursued by the Prince of this world,

Luke 22.66. Psal.22.16. Maturino tempore à rabiosis hominibus dilaniatus. Flamin.

Levit 16.7.

Revel. 5.5. Heb 2.10.

Iohn 12.31.

world, if wee pant after the Lord, and pray unto him to ſave us, leſt hee teare our ſoules like a lyon while there is none to deliver. There is mention of one Sertorius the great Impoſtor amongſt the Romanes, who kept a tame Hart, and uſed it as Mahomet did his Dove, to delude his ſouldiers, pretending that he was thereby admoniſhed and directed what to doe: But ſurely it will bee our wiſedome to bee led and guided by this Hart which panteth after the water-brookes, to pant after the Lord. And doubtleſſe this is the moſt bleſſed uſe of the creatures, when in the ſight or remembrance of them, our minds are elevated, and raiſed up to

Pſal. 7. 2.

Ab ea, ſe, quæ nam, aut agenda aut vitanda eſſet prædicans. Val. Max. A. Gel.

heavenly cogitations: And in so doing wee shall be followers of Christ, who upon all occasions, as of the water, the vine, the corne, and in all his Parables did instruct and edifie those that heard him. And thus may wee bee affected. Is there such delight and contentment to be received from the creature? then what joy & happinesse from the Creator of all things? Is there such pleasure in the cheerefull use of these things here below? then how great are those pleasures at the right hand of God for evermore? Doth the distressed Hart desire the river that shee may be relieved? Then how blessed are they that have the God of Iacob for a refuge? from

from whoſe love, neither perſecution, nor any other thing ſhall bee able to ſeparate them. And ſeeing that enmity which is betweene us and the creatures, and betweene the creatures themſelves, wee are put in minde of that great ſinne of our firſt parents: Since which time they have caſt off the yoke of ſubjection unto man, who had firſt caſt off that eaſie yoke of obedience unto God. And in the purſuite of any of them, wee may well conſider that wee our ſelves are purſued by the enemy of our ſoules, who doth more deſire to take us than wee to take the Hart in our toyles: And wee may at the ſame time both take and be taken,

Rom. 8. 39.

Sed maiori cum faſtu: Vbi aſpexit venientem ad retia cervum, Venator tacito ſaudia corde premit. Bal. Caſtilio.

as many are, who turne their liberty into licenticusneſſe. If after this manner our thoughts be lifted up in the time of refreſhing, though wee get nothing wee may gaine ſomething; and both the outward & inward man may be renewed

Meditabar aliquid, ut ſi manus vacuas plenas tamen ceras reportarem. Plini. Iun. Vt quamvis nihil eſperim, nonnihil referam. Idem.

Wee deny not this exerciſe of hunting to bee very commendable, the which was much uſed by many nations in ancient times, who beſide that helpe of ſuſtenance, found many other benefits thereby; Their health was preſerved, their bodies were ſtrengthened, and themſelves by the hardſhip endured, the better fitted & enabled for more ſerious employment; eſpecially, for milita-

Romanis ſolennis virtis, opus uniuerſa natæ, vitæque & membris. Horat. venatio Suevorum vires alit. Cæſar.

Hoc ſe labore durant adoleſcentes Germani. Idem.

military diſcipline, when by thoſe beaſts which they hunted, they may learne from ſuch as were ſwift-footed ſpeed and agility; from ſuch as were daring, valour and courage; from ſuch as were crafty, ſtratagems and policy: Moreover the minde being ſurcharged may thereby find ſome releaſe, BUT, in the uſe of them wee muſt not bee as the horſe which hath no underſtanding: Our affections muſt be reſtrained, that our delight therein bee not either inordinate or immoderate: God created us for his owne ſervice, we muſt not bee ſo re-created by our ſports, as if we had beene framed for nothing elſe: In ſo doing wee make them pleaſures

Venatu extendere vitam abnuit. Silvis. Non me ulla vetabunt frigora. Virgil. Manet ſub Iove frigido Venator Horat. Iugurtha in Saluſt. Olim certabant cum ferocibus feris, cum fit, cum audacibus robore, cum callidis aſtu. Plin. in Panegyr. Pſal. 32. 9. Illa ipſa quæ delectant, neceſſe eſt, avocent ab intentione operis deſtinati. Quintilian. lib. 10 cap. 2. Maleficium ſortius quam artificium. Io. Sarisb.

Heb 11. 25.

ſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon, and that very ſhort; and it is folly in any man to place his chiefe contentment in that which he cannot conſtantly enjoy: Alſo it doth diſcover the unſufficiency of theſe ſports to ſatisfie the heart of man, when wee ſhall ſee many being ſatiated with their former delights, to be ever deſirous of new; eſteeming that to be tedious and irkeſome which before ſeemed moſt pleaſant. Great forreſts and wide deſarts for beaſts of chaſe have proceeded from undigeſted riches and boundleſſe luxury: And it is a ſtrong preſumption of the vaine and riotous prodigality of this Kingdom, The having more Parkes than all Chriſten-

Barbaræ opulentiæ, haud ulla ſunt maiora indicia quam magnis nemoribus ſaltibuſque nobilium ferarum greges clauſi. Quin. Curt. Camden in Oxon.

Chriſtendome beſide. That prophecy of the Apoſtle may ſtrike terrour and examination into every one of us; where he ſaith, That in the laſt dayes perillous times ſhall come, when men ſhall be lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God. Such as are too violent therein doe renounce that which is of more conſequence, and ought chiefly to bee ſought after: And thoſe that are raviſhed with the pleaſures of this pilgrimage, declare plainly, they doe not deſire a better Countrey, that is an heavenly. Profane Eſau is deſcribed to bee a cunning hunter, and was thereby occaſioned to ſell his birthright; And afterward while

2. Tim. 3. 4.

Qui beſtiarum cubilia indagat potiora deſerit. Senec. Heb. 11. 14. 16. Cui peregrinatio duci non amat patriam. Gen 25. 27.

hee was hunting he loſt the bleſſing alſo, finding no place of repentance though hee ſought it carefully with teares. Take heed leſt while thou art wholly devoted to thy delights, our heavenly Father doth confer his bleſſings upon thoſe his children which formerly ſought unto him: and ſo thy vanities end in vexation of ſpirit. Then let your moderation herein bee knowne unto all men; Spend not your whole ſtrength and beſt endeavours ſo waſtfully, ſo unfruitfully; Let not thy ſoule pant after the Hart, but as the Hart panteth after the water-brookes, ſo let thy ſoule pant after the Lord.

There are two naturall cauſes

Quam ning incognita vellent luſtra ſibi; nu. loſq; datos venatibus annos. Val. Flac.

O pereant ſylvæ deficiantque canes. Tibul.

Phil. 4. 5.

Veloces iaculo cervos, curſuque fatigat, Acer anhelantes ſimilis Virgil.

cauſes of panting: Weari-neſſe through overmuch la-bour; and ſo we being wea-ried with the reſtleſſe trou-bles of this life, ſhould there-by bee excited to pant after the Lord. The other cauſe of panting, is when the lungs are ſtrait and ſmall, and not able to receive much breath: which is differing from this; for we pant after the Lord, not when we are ſtraitned in our owne bowels, like the Corinthians, but when our mouthes are open to cry un-to him, and our hearts are enlarged to ſeeke after him: Then be you alſo enlarged, and imitate this holy man David, whom you may heare ſpeaking of himſelfe, My ſoule followeth hard after thee,

Defatigatio ex laboris nimietate: vel propter pulmonis par-vitatem, Cauſabon.

2. Cor. 6 12.

Pſal. 63. 8. & 84. 2.

thee, My ſoule longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, My ſoule breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgements at all times. Thus ſhould wee from the beginning of our lives unto the end thereof pant after the Lord, who is Alpha and Omega, who breathed into our noſtrils the breath of life. That wiſe man among the Heathen, being tormented with the diſeaſe of ſhort breathing (which he thought to be moſt painfull) doth call it the Meditation of death, wherein the breath doth often attempt to doe that which one day muſt bee done. Then well may wee ſo often as we draw our breath bee put in mind of our latter end,

Pſal. 119.20.

Α καὶ Ω.

Gen 2.7.

Dici ſuſpirium potest, Hoc est, animam agere. Medici hanc meditationem mortis vocant, facit aliquando ſpiritus ille quod ſæpe conatus eſt. Senec. ep. 78. 55.

end, when the ſpirit doth returne to God that gave it: And yet the greateſt part of men are never ſufficiently inſtructed to pant after the Lord, untill extreme ſickeneſſe and the pangs of death doe teach them: whereas, if the former part of our life had beene ſpent in numbring our dayes, and remembring our Creator, with what aſſurance and comfort might wee expect our diſſolution? Worthy Calvin, who laboured of this bodily diſeaſe, looked daily when his panting ſhould have an end; and would often ſay, How long O Lord? And ſome ſpace before his death (which was juſt in the ſame moment when the ſunne did ſet) his prayers

Deſpnza. Aſsiduè expecto, dum me anhelitus deficiat.

Quouſque Domine,

prayers were nothing else, but an expression of his souls panting after the Lord. The death of Coma was thought to be very rare, who dyed by his violent retaining & holding in of his breath: But now there is nothing more frequent than this kinde of death, though not of the body yet of the soule, in those men which doe never pant after the Lord. Wee thinke it bee the signe of a dying man when his breath growes cold; And our coldnesse in seeking after the Lord, doth discover that the soule doth languish, and is voyd of the life of grace: For if our soules were inflamed with zeale, the Kingdome of heaven should suffer violence, and bee

Intra pectus inclusa anima fluem sic repressit. Val. Max. lib. 9. cap. 13.

Mat. 11. 12.

bee taken by force.

VERSE II.

My ſoule thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appeare before God?

IN that expreſſion which David uſed of panting after the Lord, wee may well obſerve, that it was not a weake and faint deſire; but moſt ſtrong and forcible. Now that wee not thinke it to bee too violent to endure, and to paſſe away as a ſodain flame in his outward ſpeech, rather than to burn conſtantly in the holy diſpoſition of his heart, it pleaſeth God to perfect his owne good work, and to give him this heaven-

ly

Aeris alternos angustat pulmo meatus, Reciprocoque nocent suspiria dura palato. Lucan. Oraque retro sorbet anhela sitis. Statius.

ly thirst: And nothing is more frequent than for these two, Panting and Thirst, to accompany each other. If we take them as perturbations of the body, that may be said of them, which is spoken of worldly sorrow, that they drye the bones and cause death: But, as in this place, being rich endowments of the soule, they bring life, and peace, and joy: By those the outward man doth perish, by these the inward man is renewed daily.

There is a thirst which beginneth when we hang upon our Mothers breasts, and continues in the strength and vigour of our lives, and doth not leave us in the time of old age, but even to the very end

end we hold a juſt proportion with this laſt age of the dying world, in deſiring wine and ſtrong drinke, that thereby our vitall heat and radicall moiſture may be preſerved. So that, through abuſe this vice of intemperate drinking ſeemeth to have a ſpeciall right in theſe dayes wherein wee live. The uncleane drunkard thinketh there is no other thirſt but onely that with which hee is poſſeſſed; nor any better meanes whereby to obtaine health unto himſelfe, or to confer it upon others, than by profound drinking; whereunto he addreſſeth himſelfe as if hee were to encounter with his greateſt enemy; and doth more than fill himſelfe with

Nec ſitis eſt extincta prius quam vita bibendo. Ovid.

Perſæ, potum tanquam adverſarium aggredientes, AElian.

with ſtrong drinke, in flaming wines, and hot waters; and, though improperly drinking more than theſe, only to kindle a deſire of drinking more. I affect antiquity herein, and will not name that which I finde was never anciently named: Hereby doth hee deprive himſelfe of his reaſonable ſoule, and becomes voyd of ſenſe, and worſe than the bruite beaſts, having no life left, but onely that of the plants, not being able to move and helpe himſelfe: And, which I cannot mention without horrour, how many are pierced with the dart of death, as with the javelin of Phinehas in the act of wickedneſſe? whoſe end is like unto that of Siſera, after

Vt Anglorum corpora, in Barbarorum naturam degenerasse videntur. Camden in Elizab.

Iudg. 4. 21.

ter he had drunke, at the ſame time to bee ſmitten in the head and deprived of life. And whereas the death of a good man is called a ſleepe, the death of the drunkard is contrary, whoſe ſenſes being bound in the time of his life, that hee could not uſe them, by death hee is awakened; Then doth hee ſee his eſtate to be miſerable by the paines of loſſe and ſenſe: where againe hee thirſteth and cannot obtaine one drop of water to coole his tongue. But why doe I ſpeake to him who is not capable to heare; whoſe caſe is moſt fearfull? For, whereas other ſinners may bee convinced by reaſon, he by the wilfull loſſe of underſtanding hath made himſelfe

himselfe a foole, and is in danger of hell fire. The contentious man thirsteth after the waters of Meribah; and the cruell man (for they must bee joyned) thirsteth after bloud, wherein is the life: Nothing can satisfie him but the fall of his enemy. But the bloudy minded man shall not live out halfe his dayes: for though the divine vengeance should not overtake him, as for the most part it doth, with rancor and malice hee consumes himselfe and drinkes his owne bloud: whose estate is worse than a Serpents, for hee beareth about him such a poyson as doth destroy his owne life. The covetous man is thirsty as the horse-leach, crying, Give,

M. Antea. vino gravis sitiebat tamen sanguinem. Senec. Cyri caput in Val. Max.

Pro. 30 15.

Give, Give. The adulterer refuſing to drinke waters out of his owne ciſterne deſireth to drink ſtolne waters, which hee thinketh to bee ſweet. And the adultereſſe thirſteth for that bitter water which cauſeth the thigh to rot (a common judgement of theſe times.) The ſwearer is ſo thirſty, that he cannot ſpeake without an oath in his mouth; whoſe curſing ſhall come like water into his bowels, and like oyle into his bones. In a word, every ſinner thirſteth for the water of Marah, which will be as gall in the belly, and bitterneſſe in the later end. Of all which I may ſpeake as Samuel of the ſons of Ieſſe, The Lord hath not choſen theſe to obtaine

& 9. 17.

Num 12. 18. 21.

Pſal. 109. 18.

taine a crowne of life. But this holy thirſt of the ſoule for God, for the living God: And whom ſhould the ſoule thirſt after, but God alone? For with thee is the Fountaine of life; thou doſt make me drinke of the river of thy pleaſures: My cup runneth over, My ſoule ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſſe: Our gracious God doth viſit the earth, and watereth the ridges thereof abundantly, and giveth drinke to every beaſt of the field. Doth God take care for oxen? then much more for man, to whom hee giveth liberty to uſe a little wine, which makes glad the heart; But moſt of all for the ſoule of man, and therefore he calleth,

Pſal. 36. 8. 9.
& 23. 5.
& 63. 5.
& 65. 9.
& 104. 11.
1. Cor. 9. 9.
1. Tim. 5. 23.

leth, Ho, every one that thirſteth come yee to the waters; and, whoſoever drinketh of this water that I ſhall give him (that is, hee that beleeveth) ſhall never thirſt, but out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living waters. The water that I ſhall give him, ſhall bee as a Well of water ſpringing up unto life everlaſting. Then ſpring up O well, ſing yee unto it; and let thy ſoule thirſt after him, who in his paſſion ſaid, I thirſt; who thirſted after us & our ſalvation; who drank off the dregs of the cup of his Fathers wrath, that we might drinke the cup of bleſſing. By the cluſter of grapes that the ſpyes brought they might judge of the fruitfulneſſe of the

Iſai. 55. 1.
Iohn 4. 14.
& 6. 35.
& 7. 38.
& 4. 14.
Num. 21. 17.
Iohn 19. 28.

the land: And by the first fruits that the Lord giveth us in this life, wee may in part discerne what the whole vintage will be hereafter. Even by tasting wee see how good the Lord is; who doth sustaine us in this our pilgrimage, when we are hungry and thirsty, and our soule faint within us, if wee cry unto him hee will relieve us. And as the Lacedæmonians doe never satisfie their children with food, that thereby they may learne to endure hardship: So those blessings which God giveth, if rightly used, doe make us the more to thirst after him. And to speake as the Church doth, stay me with flagons: knowing that the best wine is reserved

Psal. 34.8.

& 107.5.

Ita liberos alunt, ut nunquam satientur Heraclides.

Cant. 2.5.

ſerved untill afterward, and the greateſt comforts untill that better life. Iohn 3. 10.

For this kingdome wherein wee live, wee may ſpeake as the Lord doth of Canaan, that it is not like the land of Egypt, which thou wateredſt with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: But a good land, a land of brookes of water, of fountaines and depths, that ſpring out of valleyes and hils: wee have enjoyed the waters of life and the plenteous means of ſalvation. True it is, there was a time, when the three yeares of Elijah his drought were doubled upon us; and therein the burning heate of perſecution: But as Iſaac repaired thoſe wells of water that had been ſtopped Deut. 11. 10. Gen. 26. 18.

by the Philistims, which Abraham his father had formerly digged; so our Deborah (of ever-blessed memory) hath opened those fountaines which her father had digged: since which time with joy may wee draw water out of the wells of salvation. Then let us take of the water of life freely: And as that army which would not drinke, but only of the raine, comming as they thought from the divine providence to relieve them: So let our soules be enlarged in seeking of spiritual blessings; & thirst after the Lord, as a thirsty land which opens it selfe to receive the hevenly showers. We may reade how thankful great Kings have beene unto those

Isai. 12.3.

Revel. 22.17.

Mittes religione pluviâ magis usi: nam rati sese diis immortalib. curæ esse. Salust.

Psal. 143.6.

Eucherius.

thoſe that in their thirſt did refreſh them, and give them water: Then how ſhould we praiſe the Lord for giving us his Sonne Chriſt Ieſus, the fountaine of all grace and comfort, who came downe like raine upon the mowne graſſe. And though it be the commendation of David (that mercifull King) that he would not drinke the bloud of thoſe three mighty men that went in jeopardy of their lives, and brought water unto him, when hee longed for it; yet will it be our condemnation, if wee doe not drinke the bloud of our Saviour, which not by the hazzard, but by the loſſe of his life hee hath given unto us: And ſurely wee have great

Cæſar. in Senec. de ben. Xerxes in Aelian. Artaxerxes in eod.

Pſal. 78. 6.

2. Sam. 23. 16.

great encouragemẽt to thirſt after the Lord; For it is a bleſſed thing to thirſt after righteouſneſſe; and we have a promiſe that wee ſhall bee filled. And as by outward thirſt ſome are recovered from diſeaſes of the body, ſo by this heavenly thirſt wee are cured of all maladies and troubles, both of ſoule and body. Wherefore, as new-borne babes let us deſire the ſincere milke of the word, that wee may grow thereby. It will bee as ſtrong drinke unto us when wee are ready to periſh; and as wine when our hearts are heavy. But moſt of us are ſo farre from this happy thirſt, that we are ready rather with thoſe ſtiffnecked Iſraelites to murmur againſt

Mat. 5.6.

Miraberis quoſdam fame ac ſiti curari. Seneca.

Prov. 31.6.

againſt the Lord: Our ſtomacks are ſo full, that wee loath the honey comb, the word of life; which ſhould be ſweeter unto us than the honey and the honey comb. Like thoſe that have the jaundies, that which is moſt pleaſant ſeemeth bitter and offenſive unto us: And as the ſheepe, whoſe thirſt is quenched by the winde, we are better ſatisfied with vanities, and more contented with our inventions, than with the water of life. How juſtly, in regard of our contempt, may the Lord remove thoſe bleſſings from us, & turn our water-ſprings into dry ground, and this fruitfull land into barrenneſſe for the wickedneſſe of them that dwell therein.

Mel omnibus dulce, ſeverioribus tamen, &c Alex. Aphrodyſ.

Ore aperto, ventos recipientes ſitim ſuam ſedant. Val. Max

Pſal. 107. 34

Psa.65.13.

Psylli interciderunt: Auster eis omnia receptacula aquarum arefecerat. Herodot.

Nocturnum excipere rorem cogerentur. Cæsar. bel. Civil.

Pendunt ora siti, nocturnumque ære captant. Lucan.

therein. When his ſervants ſhall drinke, but ye ſhall bee thirſty; and as the old Hiſtorian ſpeakes of a people that periſhed for want of water; ſo this nation may bee conſumed for want of this living water which now wee ſo lightly eſteeme; at which time, like thoſe that have beene conſtrained to receive the dew of the night, we may earneſtly deſire the leaſt drop of heavenly comfort and not obtaine it.

If wee duely conſider, wee will approve the wiſedome of David, in this choiſe which hee made, to thirſt after the living God: Whoſe mercyes never faile, but they are renewed every day: with whom is no variableneſſe

nor

nor ſhadow of change: whereas all things elſe are ſubject to alteration. There is no life in them unleſſe it proceed from the Lord: If wee repoſe confidence in any worldly benefit, wee may as ſoone be deſtitute as Hagar was, when her bottle was empty; there had beene a worſe caſting out than the former, unleſſe the Lord had opened her eyes to ſee the wall of water. Doe wee receive ſuſtentation and comfort by any outward gift? As the brooke Cherith dryed up, becauſe there had bin no raine in the land, ſo wee ſhall preſently be at our wits end, if the Lord withdraw his mercies from us: Yea though wee have abundance

Gen. 21. 15.

1. King. 17. 7.

of these things here below, though our well bee deepe like Iacobs, & our river doth overflow the bankes like Iordane; how soone can the Lord stay the course thereof? Hee dryeth up mighty rivers. So that in our greatest necessity wee may bee to seeke; when our goods, which we thought to be our chiefest good, shall deale by us as those brookes did by the troups of Tema, what time they waxe warme, they vanish, when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place: But let us grant their request, which is the desire of the most, & the most they do desire, that they may possesse great plenty of all things during their life: yet even

Psal. 74 15.

Iob. 6, 17.

even therein do they deceive their owne ſoules. Their greedy deſires being more boundleſſe than the ſea, which hath it's limits, how farre it ſhall paſſe: whereas they are never ſatisfied untill death robs them of all. And that which is added unto them, is but as ſo much drink to him that hath the dropſie, to increaſe his thirſt. The more wood is heaped on, the fire is the greater; and their covetous appetite increaſeth with their meanes: Alſo, though for the preſent their thirſt doth ſeeme to be allayed, yet will it be like the uſe of ſnow-water, coole and pleaſing at the inſtant, but ingendring manifold diſeaſes. Their wealth which ſeemed

Cum pleni aquâ ſint ſitiunt ſemper. Alex. Aphrod.

Tabemque & morbos, ſenſim, vicenibus diſſeminare. A. Gell.

moſt delightfull, will prove a cauſe of ſorrow and anguiſh unto them: When they are in perplexity their eſtate may be like his, who had the royalty of many rivers, and yet was driven to beg a few drops of water: So they notwithſtanding all their treaſures will bee compelled to ſue for inward conſolation, and yet finde the doore ſhut againſt them. Offer unto that man which is thirſty, the beſt proviſion of meate, and hee will reject it as unprofitable unto him: onely give him drinke, and his ſpirit will come againe as Sampſons did, and he ſhall be revived. And therefore well might Saul have a cruſe of water together with the ſpeare at his

Pompeius cum tot flumina poſſideret mendicavit ſtillicidia. Senec.

Iudg. 15. 19.

1. Sam. 26. 11.

his bolſter, ſhewing that the one was as needfull to ſuſtaine life as the other to defend it. In the greateſt exigent, when our ſtrength is dryed up like a pot-ſheard, and our moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer, who can relieve us but God alone? what can refreſh us but onely this water of life? Then let my tongue cleave to the roofe of my mouth rather than I ſhould thirſt after any thing, but the God of my ſalvation. Pſal. 22.15. & 32.4.

How intolerable a torment thirſt is, there is none but have had ſufficient experience: Our Saviour choſe to expreſſe the paines of hell by the torture which the tongue hath in extremity of

a

Flagrat incensum siti cor. Senec. in Thyest.

a burning ague. And here the sick man commeth to be cured, whose disease is like a fire in his bones, whose bowels are burnt like an hearth, whose heart is melted like waxe: Then doth he implore the helpe of man; for to proceed otherwise is a methode unknowne to the world, and thought to be ominous. But there is no helpe in the sonne of man; his breath goeth forth, and he returneth to his earth. Unto whom it may in vaine be said, Phisitian heale thy selfe: As not being able to obtaine deliverance from that anguish which himselfe endureth. At last some better helpe is required, at which time, that saying of the Apostle is true, If in this life one-

Vbi desinit medicus incipit theologus. Plat. 140. 3. Quæ sitæque nocent artes cessêre magistri. Virgil. Cadunt medentes morbus auxilium trahit. Senec.

ly

ly I have hope, I am of all men moſt miſerable. Unleſſe thy ſoule can finde eaſe by thirſting for God, thy fever is come to torment thee before the time. There's no other remedy but only the ſure mercies of David, even in death it ſelfe to thirſt for the living God; who giveth unto all men the life wee now have, who giveth unto King David, and to us as Kings, that life which is for ever. 1. King. 1. 31.

In this my proceeding, I finde the poore man deſiring drinke to quench his thirſt; I cannot paſſe by one in ſo great miſery, but with the good Samaritan I muſt make proviſion for him. Doſt thou live in penury and ſorrow? Know that Chriſt himſelfe Luk. 10. 34.

did

Pſal.110.7. did drinke of the brooke in the way; that is, ſuffered manifold afflictions in this life. Art thou denyed reliefe for thy body? There is no new thing happened unto thee: Did not a woman refuſe to Iohn.4. give water unto Chriſt, being wearied with his journey? And before that Nabal rejected David; Shall I take 1.Sam.25.11. my water and give unto men whom I know not whence they be? And therefore well might Dives (that Nabal in the Goſpel) be denied a drop of water, ſeeing hee denyed to ſuccour thoſe in want. But 2.Sam.24.14. Iſai.41.17. though the hearts of men be & 55.1. hardened, the mercyes of the Lord are great; who calleth him to the waters that hath no money; who giveth liberally

liberally, and upbraideth not (as man often doth:) who calleth not many mighty & noble, but hee ſendeth the ſprings into the vallies, hee cauſeth the precious dew of heavenly comforts to reſt upon thoſe that are loweſt and meaneſt in this world. And if the deniall of ordinary water hath beene eſteemed ſo great an indignity, then how ſhould we eſteeme of Gods bounty towards us, in giving the waters of life without money, and without price? O that we were as ſenſible of the drought of the ſoule as we are of the body; then ſhould our ſoules thirſt for God, for the living God, who hath promiſed not to forſake the poore & needy: When

Iam. 1. 5.

Pſal. 104. 10.

Virgil. petiit a Nolanis aquam; nomen urbis ex carmine ſuo deraſit. A Gell.

Ideirco nimirum hoc dicta ea nomine Nola; Noluerit magnis quod placuiſſe viris. Sannazar.

When they seeke water, and there is none, & their tongue
Isai. 41. 17. faile for thirst, I the Lord will heare them.

And if it be so great a benefit to shew the fountaine unto those that bee thirsty,
Beneficium est, arentibus fontem ostendere. Senec. Then returne, returne, why will yee dye O yee house of Israel? All those that have forsaken God and his true Church, wherein is the fountaine of living waters, and
Ier. 2. 13. have hewed out cisternes, broken cisterns that can hold no water; Come againe, and yee shall be satisfied with the
1. Sam 30. 11. 12. breasts of consolation: and as that Egyptian by eating of bread and drinking of water found his spirit to come againe to him; so you by the use of the Word and Sacraments,

ments, ſhall finde the holy Spirit to come into you. Come now and let us reaſon together: Shall the ſoule of holy David thirſt for the living God? and ſhall thy ſoule thirſt for many gods? for dead gods? for idols that are no Gods, but the works of mens hands? Shall he thirſt for God, who doth ſatisfie us with all good things? and wilt thou deſire that thirſt whereby thou canſt never be ſatisfied? Abſtemious men, without queſtion! For when God hath commanded to keepe a feaſt, they will keepe a faſt: When God hath given unto all the cup of bleſſing, yet they will refuſe it (as counting themſelves unworthy of ſo great ſalvation.)

on.) What can they merit by this their abſtinence? even to drink of that cup in the hand of the Lord, which he powreth out for them. If they ſhall plead that the uſe of the cup is freely given to ſome of them; yet then there muſt bee a miracle in the change (which among the Heathens themſelves was thought to bee prodigious:) But were not that woman drunken with bloud, ſhee could not think that to be bloud which ſhee drinks. But now both ſhee and her followers by thinking that to bee bloud which is not, as the Moabites did, they run upon their own deſtruction.

Now if any ſhall object, that David might well thirſt after

Pſal. 75. 8.

Inſuſum pateræ Xerxis vinum, in ſanguinem converſum eſt. Val. Max.

Revel. 17 6.

2. King 3. 23.

after God who had dealt ſo bountifully with him: who looked upon his poore eſtate and exalted him when hee was of low degree, unto the higheſt dignity: who gave him victory over all his enemies, and made a way for him to eſcape out of the greateſt dangers: So that it had beene unthankefulneſſe in him to have done otherwiſe. As for themſelves, they deſire firſt to compoſe their outward affairs, & ſettle their eſtates, that they may not appeare to be worſe than Infidels: and then afterward to devote the remainder of their lives to the ſervice of God. Whereunto let mee anſwer: That thy petition is the ſame with Balaams, Let me dye the

the death of the righteous. Thou art therefore unexcusable O man, who in thy Testament dost in the first place commit thy soule to God, and then dispose of thy estate: But in the former part of thy life, by a confusion without any good order, thy chiefe care hath beene about thy worldly possessions; and now in thine end, it is not the love of God, but the love of thy selfe that constraineth thee to take care of thy soule. Whereas, such as have alwayes used a cloke of covetousnesse (a garment well knowne to Iudas, but never worne by S. Paul) how can they ever expect to put on the Lord Iesus, or to be clad with the rich robes of his righte-

1. Thes. 2. 5.

righteouſneſſe? No, that thine unſatiable greedineſſe will in the end bee as deadly & uncomfortable unto thee, as the Babyloniſh garment was unto Achan. And ſuch as addict themſelves to voluptuouſneſſe, rejoycing in their youth, walking in the wayes of their owne heart, and in the ſight of their eies; but intending to rejoyce in the Lord, & that their ſoules ſhall thirſt for the living God, in the time of age and trouble, when they can find no relliſh in vaine delights: At laſt when God doth bring them to judgement, can they expect to heare that comfortable ſaying, Well done thou good and faithfull ſervant, enter into thy Maſters joy? No,

Ioſh. 7 21.

Eccleſ. 11 9.

Luke 16 25. No, they may feare to bee told, that in their life time they received their good things, but now there remaines no comfort for them. Alſo ſuch as are ambitious to make themſelves a name, laying a ſure ground-worke, as they thinke, of honours and titles here upon earth; intending with thoſe fooliſh builders, which had begun that they could not finiſh, that the top of their tower ſhould reach up to heaven, hoping at laſt to obtaine a crowne of glory: But that Gen. 11. their Babel will prove their confuſion; for they invert the order of Chriſt, who hath commanded us in the firſt place to ſeeke the Kingdome of heaven: And as in the

the creation, heaven is named before earth, ſo our beſt endeavours ſhould be to obtaine that eſtate of happines, not caſting our anchor of hope upon earth, but into heaven; as David here did, whoſe ſoule thirſted for the living God; who did not then begin to ſerve God, when he had received many outward bleſſings from him. Such an objection came from Satan, Doth Iob feare God for nought? For, who ever feared God for nought? wee being leſſe than the leaſt of all his mercies: But in his firſt eſtate, in that moſt ancient kinde of life, made famous by ſo many worthyes, as Abel, Iacob, Moſes, and the like; hee put his whole confi-

Gen. 1. 1.

Heb. 6. 19.

Iob 1.

De antiquis illuſtriſsimus quiſque pastor erat. Varro

1 Sam. 17. 37.

confidence in the Lord who delivered him out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Beare, which

Sc 16 16.

he remembred with thankesgiving. And having that leasure which shepheards have,

Pastoritios. Otium volaptatis, ac lasciviæ pater Iu Scal.

he did not abuse it to wantonnesse and folly, as they were wont for the most part to doe, but being a cunning player on the Harp, and a divine Poet, (that art of poetry having its beginning from shepheards, as the song of Moses doth testifie) who

Videtur autem modulato in pastoribus inventa primum Id.

Exod. 3. 1.

formerly had led the flocke of Iethro, who at that time led the people like a flocke; Hee composed most heavenly and melodious pastorals in praise of his Creator. After that being lifted up by the

the right of the Almighty (who loveth a cheerefull giver) and not by his owne pride, whereof hee was unjuſtly taxed by Eliab, who foreſaw that the elder muſt ſerve the younger, he kept in tune ſtill, and did more excell the beſt of his nobles in gratitude and zeale than in regall dignity: And here in his diſtreſſe (a time of ſufficient triall) you ſee with what patience hee endured the curſing of Shimei, and what confidence hee placed in God. Hee doth not aske the life of his enemies, you know the charge hee gave to the contrary, and how hee was blamed for too much love of them. Hee doth not aske long life, that hee might 2. Sam. 19. 6.

bee restored unto his Kingdome, and many yeares added unto his reigne; But having a wise and understanding heart, hee seeketh for God himselfe, his soule thirsted for the living God; hee knew if his prayer were acceptable, God would give him more than hee asked, as hee did afterward to Salomon: And if God gave himselfe, he would give all things also. Wherefore let us bee followers of him, as hee was of God: And with S. Paul, suffer the losse of all, that wee may winne Christ. It will be our best advantage and greatest gaine, by any outward losse, or imminent danger to be excited to seeke for heavenly blessings and spirituall graces.

1. King. 3. 13.

Philip. 3. 8.

Verse

VERSE II.

When shall I come and appeare before God?

IT was Davids resolution, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seeke after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life. Here you see the performance thereof: He doth not grieve for the losse of any outward benefit, nor so much as mention his former estate; but onely desireth to appeare before God, whereby he hoped to obtaine that for which his soule thirsted. It is true, that God seeth us in all places; Whither can I goe from thy face O Lord, or whither can

Psal. 27. 4.

I flee from thy presence? But his favour and loving countenance is chiefly revealed in the assembly of the
Cant. 6. 2. Saints. My beloved is gone downe into his garden, to the beds of spices: God is present in the congregation, where the prayers & praises of his children are offered up as sweet odours before him. In it selfe the presence of God may seeme a cause of horrour and feare to us sinners, who are as stubble behim a consuming fire. Wee
Exod. 34. 30 know that the Israelites were afraid to come nigh Moses, unto whom the Lord had appeared. Naturally we are ready to hide our selves from
Gen. 3. 8. the presence of the Lord God: But in Christ we have confi-

confidence and free acceſſe; and having found him a loving Father, we for ever pray Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us: which wee deſire above any good, above all the good in the world. The father in the parable ſaid, Sonne thou art ever with mee, and all that I have is thine: So we by preſenting our ſelves before the Lord, come to be made partakers of all his bleſſings: Thereby wee are gathered under his wings of providence and mercy: Thereby wee are within the compaſſe of the net; and ſhall be taken with the good: Thereby wee have communion with God, and his Angels, and one with another. Then let

Pſal. 4:

Luk. 15. 31.

Mat. 13. 48.

us come and appeare before God. The children of this world are wise in their generation: If they have hope of benefite, or advancement from any superior, how diligent will they be in their attendance? How desirous to bee ever in view? How politicke in that which they give, chusing some Present of use and remembrance? Happy were we, if wee were thus provident for our soules: Then would we set our selves before the Sunne of Righteousnesse, the light whereof would be sweet and pleasant unto our eyes. Our darke understandings should be illuminated, and we made glorious within: But if wee neglect such precious means of

Quarem ut offendas me tibi esse hominem non ingratum. Pet. an. Non indignus, quem tu aliquando respicias.

of ſalvation, our danger is greater than that of Queene Eſther; ſhee feared to periſh by a temporall death becauſe ſhee went unto the King, not being called. We may feare to periſh both body & ſoule, unleſſe wee doe come unto the great King, who hath ſo often called us, who hath held out the golden ſcepter of his word unto us. Abſalom having lived two yeares in Ieruſalem, and not ſeene the King, ſhewed the dutifull affection of a good ſonne in this particular, that hee had rather bee put to death (if there were any iniquity in him) than to bee any longer deprived of the ſight of his father: By which example wee may learne to value this

Eſther. 4.

2. Sam. 14. 32.

royall priviledge that wee have in appearing before God, And to count it more deare unto us than life it ſelfe: And yet moſt men do not value this ſingular prerogative that God hath given them; even the whole world abideth in this ſinne. There
Iob. 1. was a day, when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord; but the ſonnes of men care not for the ſeaventh day, nor any other day wherein to preſent themſelves before him:
Luk 14.18. Some there are that be worſe than the three gueſts invited to the marriage: for they pretended that they could not come; theſe abſolutely deny, and ſay, they will not come: and before that they will

come

come they will pay the earneſt peny here, and reſerve the greateſt payment untill the laſt. For, with what comfort can they expect to appeare before God in that great day; who never cared to appear before him in their life? yea, rather than they would then appeare they wil call to the hils to cover them. There be others, that are ſo encumbred with the affaires of this life, that they little thinke of appearing before God; untill that hee doth puniſh them for that neglect. As the Law was our Schoolmaſter to bring us unto Chriſt by inſtruction; ſo the judgements due by the Law for our ſinnes, have beene as our Schoolemaſter to bring

Gal. 3. 24.

us unto Christ by correction. When wee have beene as wanton children addicted unto play, and omitting that which wee ought most seriously to intend, the Lord hath dealt with us as hee did by Lot and his wife (being mercifull unto them;) while they lingred, and were backward in departing from Sodom, God sent his Angels which layd hold on them and brought them forth: While wee have beene unwilling to forsake our sinnes, and ascend up into the holy mountaine, God hath sent his Angels with their swords drawne; some great plague which hath cut off many thousands in the way, that could not then come and appeare

Gen. 19. 16.

peare before God; and hath ſcourged others into the Tẽple which before were careleſſe in that duty; & though formerly wee would not ſay with Samuel, Speake Lord for thy ſervant heareth; then wee have beene enforced to ſay, Heare Lord for thy ſervant ſpeaketh; Being poore wee have ſpoken ſupplications, wee have humbled our ſoules in faſting and mourning, and the Lord in wrath hath remembred his wonted mercies.

Some there bee that come abruptly without due preparation, as if they were brought thither unawares, by ſome great & ſtrong wind; but the Lord was not in that winde: They looke for the ſame

1. King. 19. 1

Mat.10.19.

ſame immediate and miraculous aſſiſtance of Gods ſpirit which the Apoſtles had, who tooke no thought what to ſpeake, for it was given them in the ſame houre. So they take no thought what they heare, nor how they heare, thinking it ſhall bee given them in the ſame houre. Their cuſtomary performance in the firſt entrance I cannot relate without indignation: how rude and inſufficient it is, doth appeare unto all men. Will God regard that prayer, which thou thy ſelfe doſt ſo little regard? Whereas thy Soliloquie then, though performed with the beſt reverence, ſhould be but as the Amen to thy private devotions that went before:

fore: judge in your ſelves, is it comely ſo to doe? Holy David, who ſo earneſtly deſired to appeare before God, when hee had that liberty granted unto him, did hee raſhly and unadviſedly thruſt himſelfe into Gods preſence? Hee whoſe muſicke was ſo cœleſtiall, did he not firſt bring his inſtruments into tune, and then praiſe the Lord upon them? Hee firſt waſhed his hands in innocency, & then did compaſſe thine Altar O Lord. Pſal. 26.

There bee many that doe lend their bodily preſence, but doe not give their ſoules unto God: Some that have not entred into Iobs covenant with their eies, and they gaze after vanity: others that minde

minde earthly things, and they rob God of his honour,
Mat. 21.13. making the house of prayer a denne of theeves: And though Christ when he came as Man, did correct those money-changers with the rods of men, onely making a
Joha 2.15. scourge of small coards to drive them out of the Temple; yet at his second comming hee will whip them with scorpions, even with that worme of conscience which never dyeth: How shall any sinner presume to appeare before the Lord, before whom all things are naked and manifest, unlesse he resolve to abandon all wickednesse? Hee seeth thee, as if thou wert then acting thine hainous sinnes: And if the Lord

Lord did threaten to puniſh a ſecret ſin before all Iſrael & before the ſun, then how terrible wil he be in taking vengeãce upon thoſe daring preſumptuous ſinners, who make that moſt holy place a ſtage of wickednes, & a cage of all uncleannes? Therefore let us renounce all ſinne, and with Cornelius preſent our ſelves before God, to heare all things commanded of God: Let me not ſeeme uncharitable, I would be ſorry to offend the leaſt of thoſe little ones; There bee ſome that deſire frequently to come and appeare before God, which is a good gift, and commeth downe from the Father of lights: But then you muſt take heed leſt that tares

2. Sam. 12. 13.

tares grow up in lieu of the good ſeed: If any ſhall think the worke done, that is, being preſent in the Congregation to be a worke meritorious, it proceeds from that old leaven of popery, and muſt bee purged out. So often as God ſuffereth thee to appeare, hee giveth another talent, which being well uſed will further thine accompt, but otherwiſe increaſeth thy condemnation: Thinke that which thou heareſt to bee of the nature of a prophecy, which is never fulfilled but by thy practice. Be not like the blinded horſe that goeth alwayes in the ſame compaſſe. It is good to bee ever learning, but it is moſt dangerous to bee never able to come

2. Tim. 3. 7.

come to the knowledge of the truth; and if not to the knowledge, then much leſſe to the practice of it: Though cuſtome in ſinning takes away the ſenſe of ſinne, yet let not our ill doing of good have the ſame bad effect: Curſed will hee be that doth the worke of the Lord negligently; and a ſurfet by the abuſe of Gods bleſſings muſt needs bee mortall. The continuall ſound of the Word hath beene like the Catadupes of Nilus, to make us deafe, And the frequent uſe of it hath rebated the edge of our affection; ſo that wee doe not hearken unto the Lord, though the Lord hath beene pleaſed to hearken unto us: As yet the Lord hath beene

Mal.3.16. Psal.103. been slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, not rewarding us according to our iniquities; For a long time we have enjoyed this freedome to come and appeare before God: The Word hath continued as long as man liveth; the years of the Gospel have beene threescore yeares and tenne, and if those yeares be made up foureſcore, wee must wonder at the Lords mercy. Now is the acceptable time and the day of salvation: So long as wee have this blessing to approach into his presence, there is hope of pardon and reconciliation; but if once our faces bee covered (as Hamans was) that we may not appeare before the King of Kings, wee

Esther 7.8. & 6.13.

may

may feare that prediction of Zereſh will be fulfilled in us, Wee ſhall not prevaile, but ſhall ſurely fall into woe and miſery. It is true that God ſometimes denieth this liberty unto his beloved children (as here unto David) that they cannot joyne with the aſſembly; but then they are unceſſant in their prayers to be reſtored and enlarged, and their hearts are the more inflamed with the love of God, and they learne more highly to prize thoſe bleſſings which before were offered unto them; As the Church refuſed to open unto Chriſt when hee knocked, but after he had withdrawne himſelfe ſhee ſought him with all diligence. And thus

Ne amplius faciem regis videret: ut fiebat apud Perſas iis qui à gratiâ regis exciderant. Iun.

Cant 5.6.

God

God prepares a table for us in the wildernes, and relieves us in our greateſt neceſſity: Wee may ſee what aſſurance David had in ſaying, When ſhall I come? hee doth not ſay, I ſhall never come, but beleeveth there will bee a time of comfort, when hee ſhall inquire in the Temple. Nor is it without cauſe that hee ſo much deſireth to appeare before God, having ever found his eare open unto his prayer: As for Saul, the Lord was angry with him, and would not anſwer him, neither by dreames, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets; but when ſoever David inquired of the Lord, he received a gracious anſwer; which made him ſay, How amiable are

Pſal. 27. 4.

1. Sam. 28. 6. & 23. 2, 4, 11, 12, & 30. 8.

are thy tabernacles? Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy houſe, for a day in thy courts is better than a thouſand; and hee was glad when they ſaid unto him, Let us goe into the houſe of the Lord: yea in his greateſt agony after hee had laine all night upon the earth, and his head both was and ſeemed to be as a fountaine of teares, even then, in the beginning of comfort he went into the houſe of the Lord and worſhipped before hee would eate any bread: And now when he fled from his ſonne, he thought it the beſt teſtimony of Gods love that he might come and appeare before him; If I finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, hee will bring me againe,

Pſal. 84. & 122. 1.

2. Sam. 12. 20.

2. Sam. 15. 25.

againe, and shew mee both the Arke and his habitation. And although he were prohibited from building of the materiall Temple, yet had hee dedicated his body, being the Temple of the holy Spirit, unto the service of God: And hee erected a Church in his house, wherein all the vessels were holy, for none that wrought deceit might dwell therein; and there also God was honoured. And lastly hee set up a Basilica (a building well beseeming such a King) when hee, and all the house of Israel did bring the Arke into Zion, which was an assurance of Gods presence among the people: Wherefore let the same minde bee in you which

1. Cor. 6. 19.

Rom. 16. 5.

Psal. 101. 7.

Philip. 2. 5.

which was in David and in Christ himselfe, who foresaw the Lord alwaies before his face. Let thy closet bee as an Oratory, and therein doe thou appeare before thy Father, who seeth in secret, and will reward thee openly. Let thine house bee like a Church, wherein thou and thine daily and duely in the day may serve the Lord; and not like those Chappels in great buildings which are roomes of greatest necessity, but of least use.

Pſal. 16, 8.

Act. 2. 25.

Mat. 6. 6.

VERSE

VERSE III.

My teares have beene my meat day and night, while they continually say unto mee, Where is thy God?

BEfore he thirsted for the living God; and now he saith, That his teares were his meat: So that untill such time as his soule shall bee filled with heavenly comfort, he doth continue mourning. My teares have beene my meate: Whereby wee may understand the greatnesse of his sorrow, which held him from taking his bodily sustenance: My heart is smitten, so that I forget to eate my bread. And wee know that in the time of griefe, the Elders

Psal 102.4.

ders of his houſe could not perſwade him to eate meate with them; whereas the chiefe mourner in outward ſorrow deſired meate: Or elſe, his teares were his meat, that is, hee received the ſame ſtrength and comfort by his teares, that others did by eating. He was fed with the bread of teares, & had teares given him to drinke in great meaſure: And he had teares for his meate, they were his whole repaſt, ſo that no part of his food was wanting in them; and that not onely in the day, when others uſe to eate, and when hee himſelfe did mingle his drinke with weeping, but his teares were his meat both day and night. As Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples,

1. Sam. 12. 17.

Hæc itaque ſibi recordata eſt, Poſtquam ſatigata fuerat lacrymando. Sc. Niobe. Homer: Il. 24.

Pſal. 80. 5.

Pſal. 102. 9.

Iohn 4.32

ples, I have meate to eate that yee know not of; ſo may every good Chriſtian ſay, I have meate to eate that the world know not of: He findeth great comfort by the teares hee ſheds, which are the beſt evidence of Gods favour and love unto him. For

1. King. 18. 38.

as it appeared that Elijah his ſacrifice was accepted by the fire that fell, ſo it is evident that our ſacrifice is accepted by this water that falleth downe.

Man is borne unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward: The crying of the child after birth, is but the beginning of ſorrowes: Naturally wee are inclined to remorſe in our ſelves, and compaſſion towards others. And there bee

Molliſſima corda, humano generi, &c. Iuvenal.

many

many that have not power to retaine their teares; but as the chiefe Captaine ſaid, that hee was not free borne, but with a great ſumme hee obtained his freedome: So wee by our birth, are not able to ſhed ſuch teares as David did, but with many prayers wee obtaine this freedome, that wee can mourne before the Lord. It is a ſigne of life in the childe if it cryes; and it is a bleſſed teſtimony, that wee are borne againe, and have the life of grace in us, when we cry unto the Lord, and doe humble our ſelves in weeping and lamentation. Teares doe accompany any vehement commotion, and perturbation of minde: True it is, that any vaine and un-

Excidunt etiam retinentibus Lacrymæ. Senec. Ad. 22. 28.

Lacrymæ omnis fere gravioris commotionis comites Cauſabon.

worthy occaſion doth produce teares ſooner than godly ſorrow, which alone deſerves them: If wee knew rightly how to beſtow them, wee would not laviſh them ſo fondly as wee doe. In our ſelves wee are as withered branches, having no ſap nor moiſture, but from the root Chriſt Ieſus: The manifold troubles and miſeries of this life doe make us to be obdurate; and our hearts thereby come to bee harder than ſtones, which give againſt the weather. As Moſes did ſmite the rocke twice, and the water came out abundantly; ſo wee muſt often ſtrike our hearts, that teares may runne downe like a river day and night: And wee muſt pray unto

Nulli parcendum eſt rei magis quam hinc cuius tam frequens uſus eſt. Sen.

Quantum eſt Helena quod lacrymat malum. Sen. in Tro.

Num. 20. 11. Lam. 3. 18. Terque quaterque manu pectus percuſſit honeſtum. Virgil.

unto God, who turneth the flint into a fountaine of waters, to take out our hearts of ſtone, and to give us hearts of fleſh. He it is that raiſeth the ſprings from the depth of the earth, and cauſeth them to run among the hils; that worketh in us a broken heart, and maketh the eye to runne downe with rivers of water: Wherefore as Achſah having received a South-land of Caleb her father, did ſue unto him to give her alſo ſprings of water, and hee gave her the upper ſprings, and the neather ſprings; ſo wee ſhould pray unto our father, to give us the upper, and the neather ſprings; even an heart bleeding for our ſins, and an eye trickling downe

Pſal. 114, 8.

Pſal. 104, 10.

Lam. 3. 48.

Ioſh. 15. 19.

Lam. 3. 49.

with teares of repentance: yea wee ſhould reſolve not to give reſt unto our eies, nor ſlumber unto our eye-lids, untill that we have mourned for our tranſgreſſions: And although thoſe Iewes were accurſed of God and themſelves, being bound neither to eate nor drinke till they had killed Paul; yet we ſhall bee bleſſed, yea thrice bleſſed ſhall wee bee, if wee bind our ſelves neither to eate nor drinke, untill wee have fervently ſued for this meate, which was Davids diet, moſt comfortable to the ſoule: And as Adam in the ſweat of his face was to eate his bread, ſo wee by our importunate and effectuall prayer, ſhould ſeeke for this food of our

Act. 23. v. 12.

our ſoules, which may bee compared unto Manna, that came downe from heaven, and it is God that giveth this unto us; that came with the dew of the night, and this we receive with thoſe teares which wee ſhed; that ceaſed when they came to Canaan, and this ſhall ceaſe when we come to the heavenly Canaan, for then ſhall all teares bee wiped from our eyes. Laſtly, as there was a golden pot of Manna kept in remembrance thereof; ſo there is a bottle of our teares, which God keepeth in remembrance thereof: And that of it ſelfe may be the moſt powerfull argument to make us diſtill ſome teares, becauſe they are not as water ſpilt on

Exod. 16. 14.

Ioſh. 5. 12.

Revel. 21. 4.

Pſal. 56. 8.

the ground which cannot be gathered up againe, but God hath provided a flagon to put them in. Also wee may consider the necessity of them, that as the labour of the husbandman is vaine and fruitlesse, without a plentifull raine to water the ridges thereof abundantly; so other actions will be of small purport, without these heavenly showers to refresh us when wee are weary: Wherefore, as Ioseph sought where to weepe, and he entred into his Chamber and wept there; so let us seeke some retired place, that our soules may weepe in secret, as Ieremiah did: Worldly sorrow desireth to be manifest, and appeare unto men; but this godly

Nec non etiam piceor lympham. Quoniam sine aqua omnis arida ac misera agricultura. Varro.

Gen.43.30.

Ier.13.17. Nemo sibi tristis est. Sen.

godly ſorrow is hidden from the eyes of men; none but our heavenly father ſeeth it. And theſe our teares muſt not bee like the morning cloud, or the early dew, but as the former and the latter raine: they muſt begin in our firſt converſion, and they muſt continue ſo long as wee continue, ever running down plenteouſly like Aarons oyntment, which went down from his head to the skirts of his garments; ſo wee ſhould wiſh our head to bee a fountaine of teares, and that wee had many eies, that we might ſufficiently bewaile our iniquities: And that not onely for a day (which was the time ſet apart for ſorrow) but untill our eyes doe faile with

Siquis adeſt iuſſe proſiliunt lacrymæ. Martial.

Hoſ. 13. 3.

Pſal. 133.

Ier. 9. 1. Cur non oculis ſplures ſint pro bis natura dedit. Sen. in Thieſt. Cum, ut fieri dedere in unum duxerit diem. Senec.

Lam. 2. 11.

1. Sam. 30. 4.

teares, weeping untill wee have no more power to weepe. It is ſaid of David, that hee lift up his voyce and wept: So wee, when wee weepe muſt lift up our voice and our hearts alſo, unto the Lord in prayer; that ſo the teares which wee powre out, may be as a drink-offering, acceptable before him. And though by reaſon of our teares wee bee not able to ſpeake unto the Lord, yet as Perſeus wrought compaſsion in the people by his teares which ſtopped the paſſage of his ſpeech; ſo will the Lord have pitty upon us, when through the greatneſſe of our ſorrow wee are not able to ſpeake unto him: yea, then wee cry unto him with beſt

Sed aliquoties dicere incipientem cum lacrymæ præpedirent. Livi.

Vocisque repens ſingultus apertum increpuit iter. Stat.

ſucceſſe,

ſucceſſe, when wee ſeeme to bee over-whelmed with our ſighs and teares, that we cannot diſtinctly utter our complaints before him: Then alſo the ſpirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what wee ſhould pray for, as wee ought, but the ſpirit it ſelfe maketh interceſsion for us, with groanings which cannot be expreſſed. Other geſtures of ſorrow may bee acted, but teares are not ſo eaſily forced; and though they ſometime bee drawne out to make ſome appearance of outward griefe, yet in godly ſorrow, wee know, they bee alwayes ſincere and juſt; wherein they doe as much excell the other, as orient pearle doe common glaſſe:

Rom 8. 26.

Omnia lugentium officia ſolerter finxit, ſed lacrymæ procedere noluerunt Apul. Lacrymas non ponte cadentes effudit, gemitus; ex, preſſit pectore lætos. Lucan.

But

But let us thinke them to bee ſerious & without guile; yet how ſuperfluous are they for the moſt part, as one ſpake of a ſorry Comædian, that hee did ſtirre up compaſsion rather than mirth: So we may affirme the contrary, That the teares of many deſerve thus to bee reproved rather than to be pitied: And unto others that are more paſsionate and dolorous, yet not ſquaring their ſorrow according to the rule of the Word, wee may ſpeake as Paul did, What meane you to weepe and to breake mine heart? as having a fellow-feeling of their weakneſſe, who for want of comfort and courage, are weighed downe under the burthen of any calamity.

Rhodophili comædia, adeo infilia eſt, ut miſericordiam potius quam riſum excitet. Iul. Scal. Quanto riſu proſequenda ſunt quæ nobis lacrimas eliciunt. Sen. Quæ cauſa indigna ſerenes tædavit vultus. Virgil.

Acts 21.13.

mity. Wee ſhould not bee ignorant of the devices of that wicked one, who ſeeketh to deale by us, as Cyrus did by thoſe whom he beſieged; hee divided the great river into diverſe currents, by the which hee paſſed over and ſubdued Babylon: So our Enemy hopeth for victory by turning that ſtreame of our teares, which ought to bee for our ſinnes, into new paſſages. If wee have any loſſe, wee lament with unfained teares: In the death of children wee refuſe to bee comforted becauſe they are not: In the departure of our friends, wee mourne as thoſe that have no hope: yea though wee part but for a time wee ſtrive who ſhould exceed

Herodot. li. 1.

exceed in weeping: whereas it would be our wisedome to keepe this river of teares within the proper bounds, that it may not exceed the limits (as Iordan doth in time of harvest) and thereby hinder us from reaping our best benefit. Canst thou mourne at some dolefull story? yea it may be at some slanderous and malicious fiction, as that of Dido killing her selfe? And canst thou not mourne for thy sinnes both desperate and presumptuous, whereby thou hast laboured to destroy thine owne soule? As that cruell King arose, and went from a Tragœdy confounded with shame and sorrow, that hee should seeme to be touched with remorse

Invida cur in me stimulasti musa Maronem? Auson. Quod commentus est in odium Carthaginensium. Fot. Scal.

Quod pudu-isset ipsum histrionis incommodis & affection bus misericordem videri, &c. Ælian.

at

at the falſe ſemblance of an Actor, and yet be without any commiſeration towards his owne ſubjects: So wee may abhorre our ſelves that wee can diſſolve into teares upon ſome frivolous occaſion, and yet bee without any contrition when it is moſt needfull. Chriſt ſaith, Is thine eye evill becauſe I am good? What eye ſo evili and ſo full of malice, as that which is an enemy to the ſoule? Wilt not thou mourn becauſe God is gracious in giving his bleſſings? in forgiving thy ſinnes? Rather let the bounty and long ſufferance of God lead thee to repentance. Doe wee finde ſuch inlargement and quiet by thoſe common teares wee let

Mat 20.15.

Strangulat inclusa dolor atque eor, æstuat intus Ovid.

Fletus ærumnas levat, Sen.

let fall, when we are surcharged and ready to breake for want of vent? then how great consolation may wee find by our godly sorrow, when wee are as good grapes troden in the wine-presse, and doe yeeld that precious liquor whereby the heart is cheered? Doe we receive solace and release in the sympathy of a friend, unto whom wee powre out our complaint, who pittieth us, & mingleth his teares with ours? then how shall wee value these which wee shed in the presence of the Almighty, who is not silent at our teares but speakes comfortably unto our soules? Who is not like our friend that bids us bee warmed and filled, not being able

Est quædam dolendi voluptas præsertim si in amici sinu defleas. Plin. Iun. Magis exurunt quos secretæ lacerant curæ. Sen. in Agam.

Psal. 39. 12.

able to give us thoſe things we want; But he doth warme our hearts with his bleſſings, and fill our ſoules with comfort; He hath delivered my ſoule from death, mine eyes from teares, and my feete from falling. Weeping may endure for a night, and bee like unto the dew, whereby a gentle moiſtnre is ſpread upon the earth, but joy commeth in the morning: In the beginning of that great day, when the Sun of righteouſneſſe doth ariſe, he will wipe away teares from off all faces. In the meane while during this diſconſolate eſtate, wee receive light and comfort by that day-ſtarre ariſing in our hearts, the glad tidings of the Goſpel: So that

Pſal. 116. 8: & 30. 5.

Vt levis quædam & moderata humi: ſtatio terræ affundatur. Kecker.

Mala. 4. Iſai. 25. 8.

2. Pet. 1. 19.

2. Cor. 6. 10. that as ſorrowfull wee alwayes rejoyce. It is moſt juſt that teares ſhould bee our meate, when as the eyes did at firſt offend in deſiring to Gen. 3. 6. eate the forbidden fruite, which ſeemed pleaſant unto them, and to be defired for food: where we muſt obſerve the Lords gracious dealing with us, who hath taken out the ſting out of our ſorrow, & turned that into a bleſſing, which might juſtly have bin a curſe and a puniſhment: For as meate came out of the eater, ſo we receive comfort by our ſorrow, which might have beene as a lyon to devoure us; And as Paul provided for the excommunicate perſon, that hee ſhould 2. Cor. 2. 7. not be ſwallowed up with o-

ver-

vermuch heavineſſe; So the Lord in mercy receiveth us that deſerve to be caſt out of his preſence, and giveth us this ſavoury meate, better than all the delicious fare in the world; for the which our ſoules doe bleſſe him both in life and death: As it was a teſtimony of Ioſephs love unto Benjamin, that his meaſe was five times as much as any of his brethren; ſo it is a moſt ſure pledge of God his love when hee giveth us a large portion of this heavenly meate. It was a great honour unto Mephiboſheth to eate continually at King Davids table, but it is much more honourable unto us, to eate the ſame ſpirituall meat, and to drinke the ſame ſpirituall

Gen.43.34.

2.Sam.9.13.

tuall drink which David did. Then let us covet this heavenly gift; and as the Disciples said, Lord evermore give us this bread; so let us say, Lord evermore give us this meate, that wee may live for ever. It was the tradition of the Elders to wash diligently before they did eate, And Christ blamed the Pharisees for their superstition therein, who made cleane the outside, but within were full of wickednesse. But this meat doth cleanse that which is within, and the outside is cleane also. Hereby we our selves are cleansed, and all things are cleane unto us: We have right unto the creatures to sustaine our bodies; and this meate is a preparative

Iohn 6.

Non in sacris tantum, sed etiam in penore tangendo observarè re veteres. Turneb. Mar. 7. 3, 4.

tive unto that ſpirituall meat: By the teares which we ſhed in our examination, wee become in ſome meaſure worthy receivers of that food of our ſoules.

I may produce ſome examples of thoſe that have mourned, that we being compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, may likewiſe breake into a ſhower of teares. And firſt, behold how our bleſſed Saviour loved Lazarus, weeping for him being dead: And haſt thon no love to thine own ſoule? Canſt thou not weepe for thy ſelfe, being dead in ſin? Did hee weepe, foreſeeing the deſtruction of Ieruſalem? And canſt not thou mourne to foreſee, yea to behold

Iohn 11.35.

Luk. 19 41.

hold before thine eyes, the miserable estate of Gods people? Doth not the bloud of the Saints, and servants of God that is shed move thee to shed some teares? Shall Mary Magdalen weepe enough to make a bath for Christs feet? And wilt not thou weepe that thine owne soule may bee washed and cleansed? Did Peter weepe bitterly? And dost thou delude thy selfe as Agag did, thinking the bitternesse of death to bee past without the bitternesse of sorrow? And what shall I more say? For the time would faile me to tell of Iob, whose eye powred forth teares unto God; of Paul, who wept with many teares; of Ieremiah

1. Sam 15. 32.

Iob 16. 20. Act. 20. 19. 2. Cor. 2. 4.

miah his Lamentation, and of the reſt of the Prophets: Onely looke upon David, who, were it not for the diſparagement, may be compared to Heraclitus, ever weeping: But the one was to be pittied for weakeneſſe, the other to bee imitated for holineſſe. His eyes were conſumed becauſe of griefe; His life was ſpent with griefe; Hee mourned becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy, and by reaſon of his affliction; Hee mourned in his complaint, and rivers of waters ranne down his eyes becauſe they kept not thy Law; Hee went mourning all the day long, and all the night hee made his bed to ſwimme; His teares were his meate both

Sic parvis, &c.

Et ipſe inter deplorandos erat Senec.

Pſal. 6.7. & 31.10. & 42.2. & 88.9. & 55.2. & 119.136. & 38.6. & 6.6.

Rom.12.15. both day and night: Let this move us to weepe with him that wept ſo much; know-

Pſal.6.8. ing, that God heareth the voice of our weeping. Thereby we caſt aſide every weight both of ſinne and ſorrow; And our eies being throughly waſhed by the teares of repentance, wee come to ſee thoſe things which the eare hath not heard, nor is the

Pſal.126.5. tongue able to utter: And at laſt after this wet ſeed time, we reape in joy. Now let us behold the doubtfull eſtate of thoſe whoſe hearts are hard as the Adamant, being yet in the bond of iniquity; who thinke that this expreſsion of ſorrow doth ariſe out of an effeminate tenderneſſe. But wee may ſay of

of laughter, it is mad; The mirth and jollity of the wicked, being like the laughter of a mad man, for the which all his friends doe grieve. Such being in ſubjection to the Prince of the ayre, hee dealeth with them, as that tyrant did, who having interdicted private conference, and diſcontented geſtures, and hearing of ſome that wept & mourned, he ſought to forbid that alſo, leſt thereby ſome conſpiracy might begin againſt him. So Satan fearing leſt that by the teares of contritiõ they ſhould caſt off his heavy yoke, and not ſuffer ſinne to reigne in their mortall bodies, his chiefe practice is to keepe them from godly ſorrow:

Eccleſ. 2. 2.

Neque ſolum linguam nutuique ſervitute conſtringeret, ſed etiam oculis à naturâ tributam libertatem eriperet. AElian.

And therefore hee dealeth with them as the Fox doth by the Gooſe, which he taketh by the necke and ſo hindreth from crying out; Hee ſtoppeth our complaint, and prevents our crying unto the Lord; Like a thiefe he climbeth up and entreth in at the windowes of this our earthly houſe, and robbeth us of all grace and comfort. Hee keepeth the eies for his owne paſſage, making them inſtruments of wickedneſſe, and brethren in cruelty: Whereas if they were like the poole of Heſhbon, full of this holy water, hee ſhould not be admitted thereby. If Eſau found no place of repentance though hee ſought it carefully with teares, what

Heb. 12. 17.

can

can wee thinke of thoſe that come ſhort of him, who (as wee may feare) came ſhort of heaven? Where it is ſaid, that in place of torment, There ſhall be weeping; the puniſhment is moſt juſt for them that never mourned in the time of their life. The light of the body is the eye; The light of the ſoule are the teares in the eye: And as One, who had loſt the ſight of his eyes did reſolve to famiſh his body; ſo they that want theſe teares doe ſeeke to overthrow the good eſtate of their ſoules, not having this heavenly nouriſhment which David had, Whoſe teares were his meat day and night.

Mat. 8. 12. Sum Nilus, ſumque Aetna ſimul. Sanaz.

Luke 15. 14.

Gallum Terrinium, captum repentè oculis & ob id media mori deſtinantem. Sueton.

VERSE III.

While they continually say unto mee, Where is thy God?

AS the friends of Iob, that came to mourne with him, did sit downe by him, and none spake a word, for they saw that his griefe was very great; So likewise if we that passe by the way will enter into the house of mourning, and consider and behold the greatnesse of Davids sorrow, wee shall bee dumbe with silence, and our sorrow also will bee stirred: And yet these his enemies having no regard doe persecute him whom the Lord had smitten; as if the corection of the Almighty were too mercifull, they are inraged

Iob 2.13.

inraged with bitter malice againſt him. It was not one, or ſome few, but many of them that ſpake thus unto him: Nor did the ſtorme ſodainly blow over, but they perſevered in this their fury; And having ſingled him out, they give him no time to recover ſtrength, but make him to be the only mark at whom they ſhoote their arrowes, even bitter words. And this they did not in the time of proſperity, but in his greateſt neceſſity, when (as they thought) God had forſaken him, and there was none to deliver him; then theſe dead dogs curſed the King: They doe not upbraid him with any outward loſſe, for they knew how lightly hee eſteemed

Pſal. 64.3. & 71.11. 2. Sam. 16 9.

Pſal. 7. 14.

med all earthly things; but having travailed with iniquity, and conceived miſchiefe, they bring forth falſhood, and ſay, Where is thy God? As all the city cryed out, when the Arke of God was taken, And the wife of Phinehas about the time of her death named the child Ichabod, that is, Where is the glory? which was then departed from Iſrael: So theſe his enemies, thinking to make his ſorrow to be deadly and deſperate, doe ſay unto him, Where is thy God? in whom thou haſt heretofore gloried, as if thou hadſt ſome peculiar right and intereſt in him: whereas all the congregation are holy, every one of them; and the Lord

1. Sam. 4. verſe 13, 22.

Numb. 16. 3.

is

is among them: He hath bin and ever will bee a God of mercy unto us; And becauſe the cry of that innocent bloud, which thou haſt ſhed, is come up before him, Hee will ariſe and ſhew himſelfe a God of vengeance in puniſhing thy ſinnes: So that thou art taken to thy miſchiefe, thou bloudy man, and thou man of Belial; Having plowed iniquity, and ſowne wickedneſſe, thou muſt reape the ſame; for God will not helpe the evill doers: Yea rather than thy ſinnes ſhall goe unpuniſhed, thine owne ſonne ſhall lift up himſelfe againſt thee. Thus did hee beare in his boſome the reproach of all the mighty people: Before this, he was

Iob. 4. 8. & 8. 20.

Pſal. 89. 50.

checked for the pride and naughtineſſe of his heart, and that by a brother, which ſhould rather have beene a comfort unto him: Hee was ſcornefully uſed, and counted as a ſervant that had broke away from his Maſter, where he formerly deſerved kindneſſe. Hee was curſed with a grievous curſe by Shimei, who threw ſtones at him that in diſgrace was called The Stone, as if all his credit came by hitting Goliah; and caſt duſt at him, thereby telling him, that God had raiſed him out of the duſt, but now hee had provoked the Lord. Hee whoſe tongue was his glory, who made ſo many divine hymnes in praiſe of God, yet was hee a

proverb

proverb to the wicked, and the ſong of the drunkards. And what could bee more grievous unto him, than to bee reproached for that faith and confidence which hee repoſed in the Almighty? as if his former profeſſion were nothing but hypocriſie: Alſo the meaſure of his griefe was the fuller, becauſe hee ſaw that this their calumny, and words of hatred, did reflect upon God himſelfe, as if hee ſhould forſake thoſe that put their truſt in him: And therefore hee mourned becauſe they violently ranne upon their owne deſtruction in ſinning againſt the lawes of God. And ſuch is our condition, that when God hath gathered us under his wings,

Pſal. 89. 51, 52.

Pſal. 119. 136.

whosoever doth seek to hurt us, they strike at God himselfe; and in our persecution hee also is persecuted. Neither did they wound him with their tongues onely, which they thought to bee their owne, having adders poyson under their lips, whereby being stung, he lifted up his eies unto the Lord; But also by their disdainfull carriage they vexed his righteous soule from day to day; It being usuall to shake the head and to put forth the finger in disgrace. Looke how it was in the dayes of David, so it is now, and so it will be unto the comming of the Son of man: If a good man bee in affliction and sickneſſe (God chastising every sonne whom

Psal 140.3.

Psal 109.25. Isai 59.9. A tergo quem nulla ciconia pinsit. Persius. Vel collî motu, vel digiti mutatione. Casaubon.

whom hee receiveth) ſome there bee that will ſay, There is no helpe for him in God; thinking that bodily diſeaſes are alwayes a ſigne of Gods wrath: If hee fall into any offence, through infirmity, (for who is hee that ſinneth not?) they, being uncharitable, will rejoyce in his iniquity. As when David wept and made ſack-cloth his garment, it was to his reproach; ſo the leaſt ſpot upon the garment of thoſe that mourn before the Lord, ſhall bee made to appeare for their diſgrace: Yea, though they walke wiſely and circumſpectly, yet there bee ſome that perverſly will make that which is ſtraight, to be crooked. When David, in an holy

Pſal. 3. 2.

1. Cor. 13.

Pſal. 69. 10.

ly zeale and heavenly joy, did dance before the Lord, yet even for that, Michal, the wife in his bosome did despise him in heart. Many that bee now in the same bosome of the Church, and hope hereafter to bee in the same bosome of Abraham, will speake contemptuously of those that desire to have a good cõscience in all things, and are willing to live honestly. With the tongue blesse wee God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God: So those men will speake to the praise of God, that they may bee reputed the children of the most High; and yet will vilifie such as they in scorne, and

Heb. 13. 18.

Iam. 3. 9.

and the Scripture in honour call Brethren, who labour to repaire that image which was defaced by the fall of Adam, and doe give unto the Lord that which is the Lords: But envy hath ever beene like unto fire, which aſcendeth unto that which is higheſt. David, whom God exalted to bee head of the people, had many enemies; And the men of this world, doe hate thoſe whom God hath choſen out of the world; unto whom hee will give a crowne of life: Yet their owne conſciences doe tell them, that they are more righteous than themſelves. Wherefore thoſe ſervants that ſhall thus ſmite their fellow-ſervants (for many ſtripes

Invidiam tanquam ignem ſummæ petere Livi.

Mat. 24. 49.

Qui mortem ac verbera tolerabiliora crucia-quam contumeliosa verba. Senec.

ſtripes are more tolerable than evill words) their Lord ſhall come in a day when they looke not for him, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites. As for our ſelves, if we ſuffer for doing well, and take it patiently, it is acceptable with God: And hereunto were wee called, becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us; who when hee was reviled, reviled not againe: Let us conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners, leſt wee be wearied, and faint in our minds. Yee know how the whole band of Souldiers mocked him, ſaying, Haile King of the Iewes; And they that paſſed by reviled him, ſaying, If thou be the Sonne

1 Pet. 2.20.

Heb. 12.3.

of

of God, come downe from the croſſe: Yea the chiefe Prieſts like whited walls, contrary to the law, ſpake evill of the Ruler of the people, of the Lords Chriſt, of that high Prieſt that offered up himſelfe for us: Hee truſted in the Lord, let him deliver him if hee will have him: And the theeves themſelves, to make the cauſe of their ſuffering to bee more juſt, thought they could not ſpend their laſt breath better than by caſting the ſame in his teeth. All which reproaches were but as ſo many variations of that which was here ſpoken to David, Where is thy God? True it is, that our bleſſed Saviour did ſeeme to bee forſaken of God

God for a time, that wee might for ever enjoy the presence of the Almighty. If we love him, both He, and the Father will come unto us, and make their abode with us, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: But yee know him, for hee dwelleth with you and shall bee in you. How then can wicked men object, Where is thy God? seeing he is graciously present with us at all times, and neerest unto us in any trouble; as hee hath promised to bee with us in fire and water, and the greatest danger: Yet we our selves in the time of affliction, through weakenesse & want of faith, may

Mat. 28 20. Iohn 14.

Ingravescente rerum adversarum mole, ita frangitur piorum animus, ut etiam ipsi dicant sibi, &c. Flamin.

may thinke that wee are caſt out of his ſight, not clearely diſcerning his love towards us: But as Iacob, when he awaked out of his ſleepe, ſaid, Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not; ſo when the Lord doth raiſe us from our deadneſſe and heavineſſe of ſpirit, we then find that hee was preſent with us in our diſconſolate eſtate, diſpoſing all things for our future good: And therefore wee may anſwer them as David doth, Our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever hee pleaſed; Their idols are ſilver and gold, the worke of mens hands. Such are the idols of all thoſe that ſerve Mammon, who keepe their gold and ſilver ſafe, as being

Gen. 28, 16.

Pſal. 115. 3. 4.

being their onely gods that
Gen.31.34. must defend them: But as
Laban sought for his gods
and could not finde them,
so they may hope for com-
fort, and not finde it: And
then we may say unto them,
Where are thy gods? Wee
know that no man can see
God and live; The people
Exod.23.20. & 20.19. said unto Moses, Let not
God speake with us lest wee
dye: Gideon and Manoah
feared death, having seene
an Angell: And the souldi-
Mat.28. ers themselves, became as
dead men when the Angel
of the Lord descended. And
yet such is the perverse cor-
ruption of mans nature, that
they neglect the worship of
God the Creator of all
things, and doe bow downe
to

to ſuch Gods as they ſee with their eyes: The Iſraelites having formerly ſeene the Egyptians worſhip Apis (which is the ſame with Oſyris) in the likeneſſe of an oxe, they forgat God their Saviour, and began with a calfe, ſaying, Theſe bee thy gods, O Iſrael; which in a ſhort time would have multiplied into many gods. The love and reverence which little children beare to their babies, are evident ſeeds of Idolatry: and the Images of the gods are nothing elſe, but babies come to the full growth: Such as have blotted out that ſecond commandement may juſtly feare that God will take away their part out of the book of life.

Sandys.

Num. 32. 4.

Moulin. in buckler. Imagines & ſtatuæ deorum nihil aliud ſunt quam grandes pupæ.

If

If in the time of affliction, when God puniſheth us for our offences, it be a great addition to our miſery, the harſh cenſures and malignant ſpeeches of wicked men; Then it is our beſt wiſedome ſo to walke with God, that hee may be unto us a ſunne, and a ſhield, bringing all good, and defending from all evill; And as Enoch pleaſing God, was tranſlated that hee ſhould not ſee death; which is the wages of ſinne; So if wee bee in all things obedient unto Gods Word, hee will take us into his favour, and wee ſhall bee delivered from unreaſonable men, whoſe throate is an open ſepulchre: Wherefore as the lamp went not out, in the Temple,

Heb. 11. 5.

Rom. 3. 13.

Temple, before the Lord called Samuel; ſo the light both of good workes and alſo of joy, ſhould ever aſcend, untill God call us unto himſelfe: That others beholding the ſame may bee aſhamed that they have falſly accuſed our good converſation; and may be ſtirred up to glorifie God. For who is he that will harme you, if yee bee followers of that which is good? Alſo our owne guilt doth ſet an edge upō the reproaches of wicked men, and make them to bee like a ſword in our bones; Whereas if wee were innocent, wee ſhould like the daughter of Eli, neither anſwer, nor yet regard what is ſpoken unto us: Bitter invectives being con-

1.Sam.3.3.

1.Pet.3.13.

Spreta exoleſcunt; ſi iraſcar agnita videntur. Tacit.

contemned doe vaniſh away, but by anger wee confeſſe them to be true: Wherefore that wee may bee compaſſed about with that brazen wall of a good conſcience, and ſecured from the cenſures of uncharitable men; as Mithridate is made of the viper, ſo let us make that to bee our Antidote, which is here ſpoken by thoſe that had ſharpened their tongue like a ſerpent; judging our ſelves, that wee may not be condemned by them. In the time of proſperity let this bee ever ſounding in thine eares, Where is thy God? And thou ſhalt bee kept from wrath and miſery, when they do wound thine heart, while they continually ſay unto thee,

Pſal. 140. 3.

thee, Where is thy God? Had Eve thought upon theſe words, they would have bin an ornament of grace unto her head, and chaines about her necke: Shee would not have beleeved the father of lyes before the God of truth; but for want thereof ſhee miſcarried, by eating that forbidden fruite, for which her ſoule longed. Had David thought upon theſe words, being on the roofe of his houſe, hee would have ſaid, as hee did at another time, The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-worke: Then would he not have defiled himſelfe with her that was purified from her uncleanneſſe; Neither ſhould

ſhould theſe his enemies have ſaid unto him, Where is thy God? And although this affliction be grievous for the preſent, yet wee receive many benefits thereby; which may bee ſufficient to deterre an evill ſpeaker from that outrage. Thereby wee are put in minde to examine our ſelves, and to humble our ſoules for our former ſinnes. We know they could not ſpeak thus without Gods permiſſion; Wee hope that the Lord will requite good for their curſing; We mourn before him, wee duely conſider his dealing with us, and fervently pray to be ſet at liberty: as David when they ſpake thus unto him, he had teares for his meate, hee remembred

membred theſe things and hee powred out his ſoule in him.

VERSE IIII.

When I remember theſe things, I powre out my ſoule in me.

FOrmerly hee powred out his teares, and now hee powreth out his ſoule: For as the body without the ſpirit is dead; ſo our teares without the ſoule are dead alſo. Wee know that young Ptolomy being in Ceſars cuſtody he wept before him; But when hee was diſmiſſed hee warred againſt him: So there be too many, that while they be under the rod of correction doe lament greatly, feeling

Regius animus diſciplinis falacioſtimis eruditus. Hirt.

ling preſent anguiſh, and fearing future torment: But being ſet at liberty, they return to their pollutions: which ſheweth plainly, that though they ſhed many teares, they did not with holy David powre out their ſoules: Hee remembred the reproach of the wicked; for how could hee forget that which was ſo often objected againſt him? and this made his ſoule melt for heavineſſe, and be powred out upon him (as Iob ſpeaketh:) Hee remembred his happy eſtate, which compared with the miſery now ſuffered, did augment his ſorrow, and made him powre out his heart like water before the face of the Lord (as Ieremiah doth counſell:)

Pſal. 119. 28. Iob 30. 16.

Lam. 2. 19.

And

And hee hoped to bee reſtored unto his former joy, and to finde comfort by prayer; and therefore hee powred out his ſoule before the Lord (as Hannah practiſed.) And hee was inlarged by truſting in Gods mercies: Hee received a twofold benefit by conſidering the dayes of old, the yeares of ancient times: The one was to ſuſtaine him in his trouble, by remembring the yeares of the right hand of the moſt High, who had dealt bountifully with him: And as Iacob worſhipped leaning upon the top of his ſtaffe; So he in this weak eſtate did repoſe himſelfe upon the grace and favour of the Almighty. The other was to make thoſe ſinnes to be as

1. Sam. 1. 15.

Pſal. 77. 5. 10.

Heb. 11. 21.

deteſtable unto him as they were abominable before God, by calling to minde how gracious the Lord had beene towards him, how unworthily hee had requited the Lords goodneſſe, and how great bleſſings hee had loſt by the ſinnes hee committed: For I had gone with the multitude, even with all the houſe of Iſrael, being of one heart, and of one minde: But now I am conſtrained to flee with my houſhold, with ſtrangers and exiles: I went with them to the houſe of God; But now I goe from the houſe of God: Nor dare I ſuffer Zadok, who ſhould be a Seer, to carry the Arke, which ought to abide in the city, with mee in this my private

vate condition, leſt that anger of the Lord which ſmote Uzzah, bee kindled againſt mee alſo: I went with the voice of joy and praiſe, playing upon all maner of inſtruments, with ſhouting, and with the ſound of the trumpet; bleſſing the people in the name of the Lord: But now we weepe and have our heads covered: I went with a multitude that kept holyday: unto whom I gave bread, fleſh and wine; Yea I danced before the Lord, and offered burnt offerings & peace offerings: But now I may feare that I am appointed as a ſheepe for the ſlaughter, and that the Lord will have no delight in me. In this diſconſolate eſtate hee flyes

Psal. 142.2. unto God by prayer: And as he powred out his complaint before the Lord when hee was pursued by Saul, and was delivered; so now hee powred out his soule, and thereby became more impregnable, than hee should have beene by abiding in the strong hold of Zion. Having found such safety therein, he commends the use thereof unto others: Trust in him at Psal. 62.8. all times yee people; Powre out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. In the time of trouble wee must renounce all strength and worthinesse of our owne, and then God will have mercy upon us: Wee must empty our selves, that so wee may be filled with heavenly comfort.

ſort. How glorious things are ſpoken of Prayer in the holy Scripture? Moſes would not let God alone untill hee had quenched that wrath which waxed hot againſt the Iſraelites: Iacob would not let Him goe, untill hee had obtained a bleſſing, and was therefore called Iſrael. It is reported of Archimedes, that hee vainely preſumed by his art, hee could move the whole earth if he might have beene lifted up from it: But wee know aſſuredly, that righteous Elijah being caſt downe upon the earth, did move the heavens themſelves: hee prayed earneſtly that it might not raine: Hee prayed againe, and the heaven gave raine. So that pray-

Exod. 32. 10.

Gen 32 28.

1. King. 18. 4.

Iam. 5 7.

Gen.28.12. er may bee compared to the ladder which Iacob ſaw in his dreame; It was ſet upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the Angels aſcending and deſcending on it. By prayer, men (made a little lower than the Angels) doe aſcend, and the Angels doe deſcend for our protection, to pitch their tents about us: 1.Sam.14.13. As Ionathan climbed up the ſharpe rocke and ſubdued his enemies; So by prayer wee overcome principalities, and powers, and ſpirituall wickedneſſe in high places. But then wee muſt take heed to obſerve the manner here preſcribed, which is, to powre out the ſoule, to confeſſe all our ſinnes, to purge out the old

old leaven: Wee cannot thinke to poſſeſſe our veſſels in holineſſe, if wee ſuffer any dregs of uncleanneſſe to remaine in them. And as the ſent & taſt of the firſt liquor will continue a long time in a veſſell after it be emptied; So though wee have ſincerely repented of all our ſinnes, yet that originall corruption remaining will make us cry unto the Lord to deliver us from this body of death: But ſuch as are indulgent to themſelves may feare that their preſumptuous ſinnes will get the victory over them: Wherefore as it is more commodious in the firſt making and digging of a garden, to have it once well weeded (when the bad roots

1. Thes. 4. 4.

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem Teſta diu.

may bee taken out) than many times afterward; So if thou wouldeſt bee like that paradiſe wherein God walked, like that garden into which Chriſt delighted to come, then ſearch every corner of thine heart, in the time of humiliation, that there may not be any roote bringing forth gall and wormewood: Wee know that the leaſt childe remaining in the houſe, doth hinder in giving ſtate; And how can God take poſſeſſion of thy body to be his Temple, when there is any ſinne reigning therein? If wee ſinne we have an Advocate with the Father: And as that client is like to ſpeed ill in the triall, who giveth advantage to his adverſary, in

Cant. 5. 1. & 6. 2.

Deut. 29. 18.

in concealing the worſt of his caſe from the Councell; So hee ſhall bee confounded in the day of judgement, that hath ſought to hide his ſinne. For Satan, thine accuſer, will diſcover that which thou didſt hope ſhould have beene for ever buried: Then learne of Him that thus humbled himſelfe, to acknowledge all thy tranſgreſſions. Hee is a foole in worldly affaires, that powreth out all at once: But it is heavenly wiſedome, in confeſſion of ſinne, to powre out all at once, and not to keepe it in untill afterward: David ſaith, I powre out my ſoule in mee. His prayer was ſincere before God, and it was inward and hidden from the world: There was a time when

Pro. 29. 11.

Pſal. 22. 1. 2.

when hee cryed unto the Lord, Why art thou ſo farre from the words of my roaring? But now the greatneſſe of his ſorrow for his grievous ſinnes, and the calamities waiting upon them, made him ſtand amazed, as not being able to ſpeak. And doubtleſſe there is great benefit in the uſe both of ſecret and open prayer: As Paul became all things to all men that hee might winne ſome; ſo wee may uſe every kinde that wee may receive a gracious anſwer: Sometime to cry aloud, lifting up both heart and voyce, to ſhew our fervency and importunity; and it ſhall bee opened unto us that knocke. Sometime to ſhew our reverence by a ſtill voyce,

voyce, that God may therein reveale himſelfe unto us. Sometime praying with the ſpirit and with underſtanding, ſpeaking in the heart onely, not daring to uſe our tongues to call upon his name, ſeeing wee have diſhonoured him thereby: And thoſe our humble prayers will aſcend into heaven. Though wee ſhut both the doore of our cloſet, and the doore of our lips, when wee pray, being wholly ſpirituall therein; our Father ſeeth in ſecret, and is well pleaſed with ſuch a ſacrifice. If wee deſire to make our tongue to be our glory therein; yet the ſound of our words may bee ſubmiſſive, and rather a gentle noyſe than a voyce: They that

Humiles preces in excelſa porrigite. Boet.

Qui Deum precantes susurrant, tacitè loquuntur, atque intus clamant.

that doe thus, they speake softly, but inwardly they cry aloud: Hannah when shee prayed did move her lips, but her voyce was not heard; yet shee found such comfort that her countenance was no more sad.

VERSE IIII.

For I had gone with the multitude.

HIs present misery is increased by comparing the same with his former comfortable estate, wherein hee served the Lord: And the sorrow for the losse of his perfect freedome doth exceed the griefe of worldly men in their crosses, as much as the gladnesse in his heart had

Psal. 4.

had formerly beene more than the joy which they received by the increaſe of corne and wine. Outward benefits are deceitfull and vaine: Riches, and the like, may betake themſelves to their wings, and fly away: But heavenly bleſſings are unchangeable, did not wee by our diſobedience ſtop the courſe of Gods mercies, and cauſe his judgements and curſes to fall upon us. Wherefore, when our deſtruction doth come from our ſelves, when by our rebellion wee ſhall pull downe Gods anger; Then the remembrance of our former happineſſe is the greateſt aggravation of our preſent wretchedneſſe and woe.

Infeliciſſimi genus eſt infortunii fuiſſe felicem. Boet.

Alſo

Also we may obserue, that hee was not satisfied with that good which he had formerly done, neither did hee rest contented therein: But his chiefe desire was ever to continue in those holy exercises. From whence wee receive this instruction, that wee ought to forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before, pressing toward the marke: having set our hand to the plough, not to looke backe, nor to spare and favour our selves, during the time of our pilgrimage. Such as desire to worship the Lord unto the end of their lives, and are constant unto death, they shall receive a crowne of life, and an

Phil. 3. 13.

an everlaſting inheritance: But ungodly men that forſake their firſt love, like thoſe fooliſh Galatians, bewitched by that evill ſpirit, and with Demas doe embrace this preſent world, they ſhall undergoe the fierce anger of the Almighty: And as Iordan divided the tribes of Reuben and Gad from the reſt of Iſrael, who, allured with the fertility of the countrey, did ſet themſelves downe, and take up their habitation before they came to the land of promiſe; So there ſhall be a great gulfe to ſeparate the wicked (who like ſluggards fold their armes together, as if they had wrought ſufficiently) from thoſe that abide in the place of

2. Tim. 4. 10.

Num. 32.

of bleſſedneſſe.

Whereas hee ſpeaketh of himſelfe, that hee had gone with the multitude, it will not bee impertinent to conſider his twofold regiment, Over the Prieſts, and the people; For at this time when hee bleſſed the people, hee had put on a linnen Ephod over his kingly robe; Alſo his ſonne Salomon ſucceeded him therein, who was called the Preacher. This was obſerved by many nations that their Kings were Prieſts: So Melchizedek was King of Salem, and Prieſt of the moſt high God. So was Numa the ſecond King of the Romanes, and Auguſtus the ſecond Emperor, who after the death of Lentulus, did take

1. Cron 15. verſe 17. Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique ſacerdos. Vittis, &c. Virg.

Gen. 14. 18.

Livi. lib. 1.

take unto himſelfe that dignity of being chiefe Pontifex, that thereby his authority might bee made complete. Which order continued untill that Gratian did neglect that rite and cuſtome obſerved by all thoſe Chriſtian Emperors before him: This hath beene the uſe in this Land, ſince that intolerable yoke of ſervile ſubjection unto Rome hath bin caſt off, that our annointed Soveraigne ſhould bee the chiefe head of the Church, and in all cauſes Eccleſiaſticall ſupreme governor. Now where much hath beene given, there much will bee required: Therefore that ſhould be imprinted in their hearts, which was written upon

Pontificatum maximum inortuo demum Lentulo ſuſcepit. Suet

Gratianus primus Imperatorum Chriſtianorum, defervit ab hoc munere in ſitvio, Cattabus.

Exod.39.30. upon Aarons crowne of fine gold, Holineſſe to the Lord; And as the head doth guide and conduct the body, ſo ought they that are moſt eminent to leade and direct ſuch as are under them: that they may walke in this way which bringeth to life and ſalvation. We uſe to ſay, that the meaneſt officer would be knowne in his place, being unwilling to bee abridged of the extent of his power: Then how ſhould they that are raiſed to higheſt honour exerciſe their authority to reduce men to the ſervice of God, as thinking to be their moſt royall prerogative ſo to doe? Bleſſed are the people that bee in ſuch a caſe, yea bleſſed be the people whoſe God

God is the Lord: And great is the comfort that would be found by the ſerious performance hereof; when the chiefe ruler like a good ſhepheard, doth goe before his ſheepe, and they doe follow him; then may he have this good teſtimony in the latter end, That in ſome meaſure hee hath finiſhed the worke which was given him to do; and hath not willingly loſt any of thoſe that were given unto him: At which time he may pray as Nehemiah did, Remember mee O my God concerning this, and wipe not out my good deedes that I have done for the houſe of my God: Surely there is a fulneſſe of joy, in the fulneſſe of the aſſembly; when the voyce

Iohn 10 4.

& 17.4,12.

Nehem.13.14.

voyce of the congregation praiſing the Lord, like that noyſe of Charets which the Syrians heard, ſhall bee able to put that enemy to flight which doth continually beſiege us. Alſo therein is a moſt bleſſed reſemblance betweene the Church militant and triumphant; for as God commeth with tenne thouſands of Saints, and hath tenne thouſand times tenne thouſand Angels to ſtand before him; So likewiſe many and great multitudes of his ſervants here upon earth doe deſire to appeare in his preſence: And as the Angels rejoyce over one ſinner that repenteth, ſo the Saints doe rejoyce in this powerfull meanes, whereby many ſinners

2. King. 7. 6.

Deut. 33. 2.

Dan. 7. 10.

Luke 15. 10.

ners are converted.

Alſo it will not bee impertinent to conſider how David was willing to joine with the meaneſt of his ſubjects in the ſervice of God; And would bee baſe in his owne ſight, though in ſo doing hee ſeemed vile unto others. Thus in the Kingdome of grace, every valley ſhall bee exalted, and every mountain and hill ſhall bee made low. Where truth and ſincerity are, there is alſo a ready diſpoſition to receive benefit by thoſe of leaſt accompt, yea and to doe good unto them without reſpect of perſons: Paul that was indued with ſuch excellent gifts, yet as hee deſired to bee brought on his way towards Iudea by the

Iſai. 40. 4.

2. Cor. 1. 16.

the Corinthians; so in like manner hee desired to bee conducted towards that heavenly countrey (whereof Iudea was but a figure) by the Romanes; where hee writeth, For I long to see you, that I may bee comforted together with you, by the mutuall faith both of you and me.

Rom. 1. 12.

Whereas David makes mention of that singular consolation, which hee found in this communion with the people, they that are most mighty and noble may from hence learne how to esteeme of their poore brethren, for whom Christ died. Amongst barbarous nations there is most tyrannicall usurpation of power; who thinke the vulgar

vulgar unworthy to inhabite the ſame walls, to enjoy the ſame light, to breathe, to ſpeake, to have the ſhapes of men: But as the brethren of Dives, and all others who ſeeme to be gods upon earth, ſhall dye like men; So they which now ſeeme to bee as wormes and no men, after death ſhall become glorious.

Quod ſpiratis, quod vocem mittitis, quod formam hominum habetis indignantur. T. Livi. lib. 42.

Likewiſe we may take notice how worthy of blame they are, who doe oppoſe themſelves againſt the godly example of David, thwarting and contradicting his heavenly carriage by their unadviſed practice of the contrary. Here hee ſpeaketh, that hee went with the multitude, and they peremptori-

ly affirme that they will not go becauſe of the multitude.

John 1.45. Hee who was a true Iſraelite, in whom was no guile, knew right well, that they were not

Rom.9.6. all Iſrael which were of Iſraell: But yet the duty it ſelfe being holy, and ordained as the royall meanes to make thoſe which were the ſeed of Abraham to become children; he was ready to joyne with them therein. Who have more need of the Phyſitian than the ſicke? and to be called to repentance than ſinners? Wherefore they offend that forbeare aſſembling themſelves together: And they alſo may juſtly be reproved, who thinke if they ſhould goe with the multitude, their name would lye

hid

hid in obscurity, and therefore out of vainglorious singularity, they seeke out many inventions, with Theudas boasting themselves to bee some body. Thus doe hereticks and sectaries by jarring, warre against the peaceable estate of the Church: But there was a curse pronounced against him that should attempt the building of Iericho, which was overthrowne by Ioshuah; And there is no blessing due unto them, that againe doe lay the foundation of these confused Babels, which have beene razed and laid levell by the Churches champions. That may bee said of our times, which was once spoken of the Israelites, The wood devoured

Ambitio magnis addita est virtutibus. Et eminendi fervor, & vincendi dolens Cupido famæ, Dom. Baudius.

Act. 5.36.

Iosh.6.26.

2, Sam. 18. 8.

voured more people than the ſword. We may praiſe God that wee are delivered from the ſword of perſecution and of our enemies: But in the meane while, how many doe loſe themſelves by intricate by-paths, thinking there bee more wayes than one to walke in; and thereby fall headlong into dangerous errors? It ſheweth the deſolation of a countrey, when the Kings way ſhall be forſaken, ſo that none doe travaile therein; And we may feare that it doth not prognoſticate any happineſſe unto our Land, when this way of King David ſhall lye waſte: For now men will goe by themſelves, but hee went with the multitude.

Iſai. 33. 8. Iudg. 5. 6.

Verſe

VERSE IIII.

I went with them to the houſe of God.

BEcauſe the greateſt number doe goe in the broad way that leadeth to deſtruction, and wee are forbidden to follow a multitude to doe evill; therefore upon the firſt mention he preſently addeth the place whither hee went with them, which was, to the houſe of God. Hee was not occaſioned thus to doe in imitation of others which did the like; though it were to bee wiſhed that wee had attained thus farre, that wee would be followers together of him, and marke thoſe which walke after this example:

Mat. 7.13.

Exod. 23.2.

Phil. 3.17.

Act.20 35.

ſample: But as it is more bleſſed to give than to receive, ſo it is a greater happineſſe to give this good example unto others, than to take it from them. Thus David ſhined as

Phil.2.15.

a Light in the world, that the people being illuminated by this pillar of fire, might come to the eſtate of bleſſedneſſe. And thus wee, if wee deſire to ſhine as the ſtars (whoſe motion is contrary to the world) wee ſhould labour to rectifie others, rather than to bee depraved with their vices: Though wee faile of this holy ambition, or want meanes and ability to bee as Leaders in this noble army, yet wee may bee drawne by the example of the multitude (which for the moſt part

Vt ſidera contrarium mundo iter intendunt; ita ſapiens. Senec. Et qui exemplo aliis eſſe debetis, aliorum exemplo peccetis potius quam alii veſtro recte facitis. Livi. lib. 3.

part use to bee very powerfull) to joyne with the assembly in all heavenly duties: And not to do like unto those which stand convicted, because they will not goe with the flocke to heare the voyce of the shepheard: Nor yet like those which discover their backwardnesse, by comming after the multitude to the house of God; Whereas it were more commendable to goe with them, or before them. Such may feare to receive a curse in the end for their negligent sloth, rather than the blessing in the conclusion. In Carvans, which goe unto the Temple at Ierusalem, the hindermost are exposed unto the greatest danger of the free-booters:

Occupet extremum scabies. Horat.

Sandys.

And in this passage to the house of God, they that are last may soone bee surprised by the enemy, and hindered in their dull proceeding: Whereas if wee were indued with the Spirit (like those Worthies which brake through the hoste of the Philistims, to draw water) wee would overcome all impediments, that wee may obtaine the water of life: And as the chaines did fall from the hands of Peter, so we should cast off all incumbrances wherewith our feete are bound, that wee may runne the wayes of thy commandements: Yea then wee would thinke Gods house to be like Goshen, inlightened by his gracious countenance; And

2. Sam. 23.

to

to be debarred from it, more grievous than all the plagues and judgements of Egypt. There the frogges came into the houſe and chamber of Pharaoh; And thou haſt noyſome luſts and uncleane thoughts in thine heart, which ſhould bee the throne of the great King. They had thick darkenes which might bee felt, ſo that no man roſe from his place: But thy groſſe darkeneſſe which hath overſpread the whole man, is the more fearefull, becauſe thou haſt no feeling thereof; whereby thou doſt continue in the eſtate of wrath as at the firſt. There was the death of the firſt-borne (in whom parents ſeem to live even when they are dead:) And thou

Exod. 8. 3.

& 10. 21.

& 12. 29.

destroyest thine owne soule, which in the beginning did give life to thy body; and by which the righteous shall live for ever in blisse & happinesse. And yet though Gods judgements be so great and terrible upon those that want or neglect this meanes of perfect freedome, and the mercy and deliverance so rich and plenteous, that is offered thereby, how foolish and careless are most men, in their contemptuons vilifiing, and disdainfull reiecting of this blessed liberty? Mention is made of one that was slaine by the people which trode upon him in the gate, when with greedy violence they strove for their bodily sustenance: but there is no such

a King. 7. ver. 17.

ſuch violence offered in ſeeking for that heavenly food; and yet we live not by bread, but by the Word, which is exhibited unto us in the houſe of God: And in the time of famine, of warre, of peſtilence, and any other calamity, wee finde releaſe by the prayers and ſupplications which are offered up unto the Lord. Come then, and let us goe up to the mountaine of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of Iacob: He will teach us of his waies, and wee ſhall walke in his paths. One day in his courts is better than a thouſand. How glad was David when they ſaid unto him, Let us goe into the houſe of the Lord? As here he teſtifieth, that

1. King. 8. ver. 37, 38.

Iſai. 2. 3.

pſal. 84. 10 & 122. 1.

that when hee went into the house of God, it was

VERSE IIII.

With the voyce of joy and praise.

Omnes tendunt ad gaudium. Senec.

AND now wee would thinke that the whole world should follow him; for what man is there that doth not labour for ioy? But as some have put out the element of fire, affirming that there is no other but this grosse terrestriall fire which wee use: So most men thinke there is no other ioy but this which they find in their sensuall delights. True it is, that there may bee a confused sound of ioy in earthly pleasures; but the voyce of ioy is

is onely in heavenly things: And as that excellent muſick of the voyce is to bee preferred before the harmony of inſtruments without life, whether pipe or harpe, though they give a diſtinction in their ſounds: So this ioy doth farre tranſcend all thoſe vaine and empty delights which wee finde here upon earth. It is reported of ſome that they have beene able to containe their greateſt ioy within themſelves, that none could take notice thereof; but Davids ioy was ſo great, that out of the abundance of his heart hee could not forbeare to ſpeake with his mouth: And ever ſince in our beſt mirth and reioycing, wee ſeeke to imitate the voyce

Metellus ſummum gaudium intra ſe cont nuit. Val. Max.

Nec ſunt grata tibi gaudia ſiqua 'arent. Martial.

Iam. 5. 13. voyce of David in singing of Psalmes: whereby wee endeavour to bee composed and prepared for that life, when wee shall alwayes bee lauding the name of the Psal. 108. 1, 2. Lord: And as David saith, I my selfe will awake early, I will sing and give praise even with my glory. Soe we that are dead in Christ, shall then rise first out of those beds where wee have slept and rested, that wee may for ever sing praises unto the Lord. These two, Ioy and Praise, are so ioyned togeth. r of God, that no man can put them asunder: Where God hath filled the heart with ioy it will breake forth in praise and thankesgiving; And to offer the sacrifice of praise without

without reioycing were to offer a dead ſacrifice without any life: By both theſe wee are ſupported when wee walke in the wayes of ſalvation: If David found ſuch comfort in the paſſage, then how was hee tranſported with ioy when hee came into Gods houſe? If wee find ſuch conſolation in our pilgrimage, then how great bleſſings are prepared for us in our long home? If the firſt-fruits bee ſo precious, how plentifull is the harveſt? When our lives are ended, then begins our perfect ioy: when our ſoules and bodies are againe united, then there is fulneſſe of ioy; yea then both Ioy and Praiſe ſhall bee ioyned for evermore.

Verſe

VERSE IIII.

With a multitude that kept holy-day.

BEcauſe we ſhould not be perplexed with the difficulty of theſe words, in regard that our celebration of thoſe dayes which wee call holy, doth ſo far differ from that which is here intended; I thinke it moſt needfull to repreſent the manner how this day was ſolemnized: In which, the deſire of David and the people was like that of the Angel & the multitude of the heavenly hoſte praiſing God, and ſaying; Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, good will towards men: So this bleſſed company

Luke 2.13,14.

company did firſt ſeeke the glory of God, in ſacrificing oxen and fatlings, in offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, in the ſound of muſicke, lifting up the voyce with ioy, And that there might bee peace upon earth when Gods Arke ſhould bee placed in the midſt of the tabernacle, and his worſhip duely obſerved. Laſtly, good will towards men, when the King bleſſed the people in the name of the Lord, and did diſtribute bread, and fleſh, and wine; So that hee did not exclude the outward refreſhing of the body, after the ſerious and devout performance of all heavenly duties. The makers of lawes in ancient time did inſtitute feſtivall

Tanquam neceſſarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum, Sen.

ſtivall dayes, that the people might not bee overcharged with too much labour; but re-gaining ſtrength and vigour by the ceſſation, might proceed in their worke with alacrity and diligence. The beſt uſe and benefit that wee can make of any holy-day is to take off the minde from worldly cares, wherewith we are naturally ſurcharged; and to addict our ſelves to divine meditations and religious exerciſes: Even among the Heathen, thoſe Siſters mentioned in the Poet were thought to bee iuſtly puniſhed, for being too intent to their domeſticke labour, which made them omit the publike rites. Wee doe not well; this is a day of good tidings

Quia aliquando nihil cum populo agi utile futurum erat. T. Livi. Luce ſacrâ requieſcat humus, requieſcat arator. Tibul.

Et adhuc Miacia proles
Vrget opus ſperniteque Deum feſtumque profanat. Ovid.

2. King. 7. 9.

tidings, and wee hold our peace: Wee may feare leſt the leproſie of thoſe foure men ſhould cleave unto us, if wee neglect to praiſe and glorifie God for his manifold bleſſings. Wee cannot complaine as Druſus did, that from his child-hood hee never had a good day: For though we ſhould endeavour to keepe every day in the yeare holy, yet we could not correſpond in thankfulneſſe, with the riches of his bounteous love, and plenteous mercy: yea wee may rightly acknowledge that every day in our life hath beene an holy-day: For as it was the cuſtome of moſt nations not to puniſh malefactours upon dayes of feſtivity and reioycing,

Livius Druſus dixit, uni ſibi nec puero quidem unquam ferias contigiſſe. Senec.

2 Sam. 19. 22. Mat. 14. 2.

Observatum ne quoties introiret urbem Oct. Aug. supplicium de quoquam sumeretur. Suet.

cing, so the Lord hath beene gracious in pardoning our offences, not dealing with us after our sinnes, nor rewarding us according to our iniquities. And therefore wee must blesse his holy name, who hath not only delivered us from evill, but also hath bestowed so many blessings upon us; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindnesse & tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things: And as the master of the family upon such dayes did bring out unto his children and servants, all things which might bee a meanes of delight and recreation; so God, like a good housholder, hath accomoda-

Hilaritatis instrumenta domesticis præbebat. Causabon.

ted

ted us his ſervants, with all things uſefull and convenient for our cheerefull ſervice of him, that wee might make a ioyfull noyſe unto the God of Iacob. Upon thoſe dayes they had inſtruments of muſicke; and what a ſweet harmony is there, when the will and the affections, and every power and faculty of the ſoule doth conſent in praiſing the name of the Lord? They had plenty of proviſion and abundance of wine; And hath not Wiſedome killed her beaſts, and mingled her wine, and furniſhed her table? Doth not God give unto us that heavenly Manna, the bread of life, ſatisfying our ſoules as with marrow, and making our cup to

Pſal. 81. 1.

Omnia iam feſtâ fervet domus utraq; pompâ. Stat. Tibia pro lituus, &c. Claud.

Iſte dies ſemper dapibus celebretur opimis. Idem. Pro 9. 2.

Quæque ſemel toto veſtis miſit ſimitur anno. Ovid.

to runne over? They did then put on their coſtlieſt garments: And wee have a wedding garment at this feaſt, which is as a clothing of wrought gold; and as a white robe whereby our nakedneſſe is covered: They did ſet up many lights; And wee have many golden candleſticks, and ſhining lights; yea the word is a light unto our feete. Therefore let us keepe the feaſt in ſincerity and truth: Let it be our chiefe aime and endeavour, that the inward man, as well as the outward, may thereby bee renewed. Among the Heathen, it was thought to bee lawfull upon the beſt dayes to ſpread nets to take birds: Sure I am, that Satan who is

Pſal. 45 13. & 32. 1. Revel. 7 9.

Aperta multa tecta colluscent face. Sence. in Thyeſt.

Fas & iura ſinunt — Inſidias avibus moliri. Virgil.

a

a cunning fowler, upon theſe dayes is moſt induſtrious in ſetting of ſnares. How circumſpect ought wee to bee in avoyding this danger, mounting up with the Eagle, which makes her neſt on high; raiſing our ſoules by the wings of fervent prayer and heavenly contemplation? And as Ceſar did leade out his ſouldiers upon feſtivall dayes, and have them in a readineſſe, leſt that the enemy ſhould get an advantage againſt him; So ought we to exerciſe our ſelves, and to ſtir up thoſe gifts that are in us, that our adverſary may not bring us to deſtruction. How happy is that man, which doth thus reclaime himſelfe, and laboureth to bee righteous

In feſtis diabolus occupatiſsimus.

Iob 39. 27.

Sine causâ educebat; præcipuè pluviis & feſtis diebus Suet. Sic Epaminondas.

ous as Lot was, in a sinfull generation; When the whole Herd of the vulgar people doe runne violently into the greatest dangers. David and the multitude did begin to keepe this holy-day when Uzzah was smitten; at which time the Lord made a breach upon them, for that they sought him not after the due order. Most men doe not seek after the Lord upon such dayes; or if they doe, it is rather with confusion than good order; and therefore may feare a curse for doing this worke so negligently. The Lord may now speake, as hee did by the Prophet, Your appointed feasts my soule hateth; for you chuse your owne wayes, and de-

Nisi forte his maximè diebus animo imperandum est: ut tunc voluptatibus solus abstineat, cum in illas omnis turba procubuit. Senec.

1. Chro. 15. 13

Isai. 1. 14.

light

light in your abominations. It was the policy of the Benjamites to catch the daughters of Shiloh, when they came out to daunce in their daunces at the feaſt of the Lord: The like policy was uſed by Romulus upon the ſame occaſion. And thus very many both men and women are captivated and brought into bondage, at that time when we celebrate our greateſt deliverance: who being carnally minded doe looſen the reines, and walke after their owne luſts, ſinning, that grace may abound, and uſing their liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh. The carriage of moſt men in our chiefe holy-daies, may be compared to that of

Iudg. 21. 22.

Iuventus Romana ad rapiendas virgines diſcurrit. Livi.

Nam remittere animum eſt amittere. A. Gell.

the Romanes in their Saturnalia: But wherein they testifie their joy and thankesgiving for the nativity of Christ, I am not able to discerne; when as the pipe, and harpe, and wine are in their feasts: But they regard not
Isai.5.12. the worke of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. If musicke bee so needfull at such a time, then that people may bee cõmended which did chant
Amos 6.5. to the sound of the Viole, and invented to themselves instruments of musicke like David; But they profanely depraved his holy example: for hee used them as helps to devotion, not as provocations to luxury and wantonnesse. We know that the minstrels

ſtrels were put forth before the dead was raiſed; And wee may bee aſſured, that by them wee receive no furtherance towards our new life of grace. If dauncing be ſo pertinent at this time, the daughter of Herodias may ſeeme to bee well nurtured; but you remember what an evill effect was produced thereby: If coſtly garments and outward ornaments bee the beſt expreſſion of our joy; then let us joyne her that tyred her head, unto him that was clothed in purple and fine linnen, as a fit couple for ſuch an occaſion: If variety of meate can ſuffice to cheare the ſoule, then that wicked nation might have beene ſpared which offen-

Mar. 9. 23.

Mar. 6. 22.

1. King. 9. 10. Luke 16. 19.

Ezech.16.49. ded in fulneſſe of bread: If gaming and paſtimes muſt neceſſarily be annexed hereunto, then let us view that people which ſate downe to Exod.32.6. eate and drinke, and roſe up to play: But wee have not 1.Theſ.4.6. thus learned Chriſt, being taught not to goe beyond, and defraud our brother; Ephes.5.4. Nor to ſuffer filthineſſe, fooliſh talking or jeſting, nor drunkenneſſe and revellings, which are works of the fleſh. Let no man miſtake mee, as if in any of theſe above-named particulars (which may bee uſed without mixture of evill) I would derogate from the freedome and bounty of Pſal.112.5. that man, who doth guide his affaires with diſcretion: But if wee ought to bring a-

gaine

gaine our brothers oxe, when it goes aſtray; then much more our brother himſelfe: and to ſhew him a more excellent way; that ſo hee may not bee lord of miſ-rule, by letting him that is unjuſt to bee unjuſt ſtill, and him that is filthy to bee filthy ſtill: When his houſe which at all times, and eſpecially at this time, ought to bee a Church, ſhall rather be like unto Golgotha, a place of rottenneſſe, where Chriſt ſhall bee crucified afreſh, by all manner of looſeneſſe, and profanation. Wee are exhorted to hoſpitality, becauſe thereby ſome have entertained Angels: But in receiving ſuch a diſſolute company, there is little hope of harbouring either

Deut. 22. 1.

Rev. 22. 11.

Heb. 13. 2.

Angel, or Saint. Moſt that come are not worthy; and others would bee compelled to come in, who in a modeſt ſobriety doe forbeare that bold intruſion: Wherefore when thy fountaines bee diſperſed abroad, and thou doſt draw out thy ſoule to the hungry, remember eſpecially the houſhold of faith, and them that bee induſtrious, that their bowels may be refreſhed by thy liberality, which will bee as ſleepe to the labouring man, ſweet and comfortable. Such was the practice of this man of God which hee now recordeth, who after the people had joined with him in the ſervice of the Lord, hee gave unto them for the reliefe and ſuſtentation

Pro. 5. 16.

Iſa. 58. 10.

Eccleſ. 5. 12.

ſtentation of their bodies: Alſo at another time, when hee offered towards the building of the Temple, after that hee and all the congregation had worſhipped the Lord, and ſacrificed ſacrifices, they did eate and drinke with great gladneſſe. 1. Chron. 29. verſe 22.

It was a iuſt complaint in ancient times, that December was changed from being a month, to be a yeare: Wee cannot boaſt of any amendment in our dayes, which would bee more uſefull than the Gregorian reformation. Some doe preſume to prognoſticate of the twelve months by their obſervation of the twelve dayes; but we may with more ſafety iudge what the converſation of Olim menſis December fuit, nunc annus, Senec.

ſome men will bee the following yeare, by marking their carriage during theſe feſtivals: David ſpeaketh here but of one holy-day which hee and the multitude kept, whereas theſe men are willing to keepe a multitude of holy-dayes, being fit to live in a common-wealth like unto that of the Athenians, who had more daies of pleaſure than of imployment. Such doe greatly offend in abundance of idleneſſe, paſſing their time as ſtrangers here, but without preparation for their long home: Never calling to minde how many good dayes they have loſt, without the leaſt benefit either to themſelves or others: And yet, as the rich man in the

Plures voluptatibus dicari quam negotijs N. iudici. Candabon. Veram ſicut peregrinantes tranſiere. Sanct.

Amici diem perdidi. Suet.

the Parable, who had many flockes, and herds, could not bee ſatisfied unleſſe he might take that little ewe lambe of the poore man; So theſe men are not contented with the great number of profane holy-dayes, as they make them, unleſſe they may incroach upon the Lords Sabbath: Whereof I will forbeare to diſcourſe, leſt I might ſeeme to prevent my ſelfe, by giving an anſwer to Davids demand, before I come to the queſtion; which is,

2. Sam. 12. 3.

VERSE V.

Why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted in me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him.

him for the helpe of his countenance.

WHerein hee makes further declaration of his sorrowfull and perplexed estate; that his soule in this time of trouble did pant and thirst, and was powred out, and cast downe, and disquieted, not finding release from misery, nor evasion out of these calamities. Mat.6.23. Now if the light that is in thee be darkenesse, how great is that darkenesse? and if the soule that is in thee be sorrowfull, how great is that sorrow? Pro.12.25. When heavinesse in the heart of man, maketh it stoupe, yea to be cast down as Davids was; And yet there is great cause that the soule bee

bee lifted up with joy, and not dejected with griefe; if wee conſider the originall of it, that it proceedeth from God himſelfe, who created us after his own image, breathing into us the breath of life, whereby wee became living ſoules: So that wee who were made but a little lower than the Angels, were made much higher than all other creatures: For when the ſpirit of the beaſt goeth downeward to the earth, our ſpirit ſhall returne to God that gave it. Alſo there is cauſe of ioy unto the ſoule in regard of the body: God gave the body unto the ſoule, that it might raiſe the body unto heaven; Hee did not give the ſoule unto the body that

Igneus eſt illis vigor, & cœleſtis origo. Virgil.

Gen. 1. 27. & 2. 7. Pſal. 8. 5. Mortalibus alti quantum cœlicolæ, tantundem animalibus iſti præcellunt cunctis. Silius, Eccleſ 3. 21. & 12, 7.

Deus dedit corpus animæ ut illud in cœlum eveneret, Non dedit animam corpori, ut, &c.

Admonet figura, &c. Bo-et.

that it might preſſe the ſoule to the earth. Shall the body be erect towards heaven, and the ſoule decline towards the earth? Let us conſider how helpfull the body is to the ſoule in the worſhip of God, when our eyes wait upon him, and our tongue is our glory to praiſe him, and wee lift up pure hands, and daily bow our knees before him; when our feet doe carry us to his houſe, and there wee proſtrate our whole body in his preſence: Thus in our eſtate of grace there is an happy union and conſent betweene them both. But as

Gen. 2. 18. Eve, who was made a meete helpe, proved a cauſe of the greateſt woe and miſery; So the body which ſhould aſſiſt the

the ſoule doth rebell againſt it, and thereby becomes a great annoyance: Like that kinde of torment, when they did binde the dead and the living together; So the ſoule that lives for ever, and is willing to doe good, is ioyned unto a body that is weake, yea even dead to any holy duty: And then the ſervant is upon an horſe, and the Prince doth walke as a ſervant upon the earth; the hand-maide is advanced, and the miſtreſſe brought downe to the foot-ſtoole: The body doth bring the ſoule into captivity, and make it of a king to become a ſervant, or elſe a tyrant. Wherefore when wee finde a law in our members warring againſt the law

Corpora cadaveribus adverſa adverſis alligata, Val. Max.

Epheſ. 2. 5. Eccleſ. 10. 7.

Bucherius ad Valerian.

Modo rex eſt modo tyrannus. Senec.

Rom. 7. verſe 23. 24

law of our minde, wee muſt pray to be delivered frō this body of death. It was obſerved that when the body ſleepeth, the ſoule hath moſt liberty: And wee know aſſuredly, that when our bodies ſhall bee laid to ſleepe in the grave, our ſoules ſhall bee inlarged, and delivered from that earthly houſe, wherein they were long pent and impriſoned: And as the ſerpent doth become young againe after it hath caſt off the skinne, ſo the ſoule ſhall bee clothed with maieſty and glory, when this fraile body ſhall waxe old like a garment, and bee folded up as a veſture, untill the end of all things; and then this vile body ſhall be faſhioned like unto

Anima dum corpori vires adminiſtrat, nequaquam vacat ſibi, &c. Hippocrat.

Terreno carcere reſoluta cælum libera petit. Boet.

Vt novus ſerpens poſitâ cum pelle ſenectâ, &c. Ovid.

to the glorious body of Chriſt: and being reioyned unto the ſoule, ſhall enter into the ioy of our Maſter. If that father did ſo reioyce when he ſaw his ſonne to be alive, whom hee thought to bee dead, then how excellent ſhall our ioy bee, when the body which was dead ſhall bee alive, and they both being knit together ſhall live in bliſſe for evermore? Did thoſe ſeven yeares ſeeme to bee but a few dayes, for the love that Iacob had to Rachel, though hee ſuffered the drought in the day, the froſt by night, and watched both day and night? Then how wonderfull ought the love of the ſoule be to the body? cheerfully ſerving the Lord, patiently

Gen.46.30.

& 29.20.

& 31.40.

patiently enduring all tryals and afflictions, not being caſt downe, as if it were without hope, but looking for the Saviour, who ſhall unite both ſoule and body; And wee
Mat. 22. 30. ſhall be as the Angels of God in heaven.

Let us now take notice of Davids examination of himſelfe, that wee thereby may learne to iudge our ſelves, and wee ſhall not bee iudged. Formerly hee had with his whole heart ſought unto the Lord, to ſhew him the light of his countenance; He had earneſtly deſired to appeare before God; Hee had humbled himſelfe in ſorrow for his owne tranſgreſſions, and the ſins of other men. Now God accepteth the will for

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the deed; And they that mourne have a promiſe of comfort. Why then art thou caſt downe, O my ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted in me? Alſo hee did commune with his owne heart, and was no fugitive from it, as many are, who have greateſt reaſon to bee ſorrowfull, and to feare leſt their ſoules ſhould bee caſt downe lower than Davids was, becauſe they never looke home to examine and prove themſelves, and to know that Chriſt is in them, except they bee reprobates: But David did make diligent ſearch in his owne heart, and in all things deſired the good and comfortable eſtate of it. Then, why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoule,

Mat. 6.

Pſal. 4. 4.

2. Cor. 13. 5.

Pſal. 77. 6.

ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted in me? Remember the workes of old, how graciouſly the Lord hath dealt with thee. Say not within thy ſelfe, that his mercy is clean gone for ever, for thou doſtſtil enioy many bleſſings, and his grace doth now keep thee from fainting. Conſider that in this chaſtiſement the Lord dealeth with thee as with a childe: and it is not his good pleaſure that thou ſhouldeſt have ſorrow upon ſorrow; but that this light affliction working for thy good, may bring thee to an everlaſting weight of glory: wherefore acknowledge this to bee thine infirmity; rebuke and ſmite thy ſelfe, ſaying, Why art thou caſt

downe, O my ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted in mee? It muſt not bee denied, that the ſoule is ſometime diſquieted, when wee are not able to give any reaſon of it; But then it behoveth us to make ſtrict inquiſition into our ſelves, and to ſee if there bee any root of evill, like Achans wedge, which is the cauſe of our trouble: If there bee any Ionas lurking in the bottome, which may be ſufficient not only to caſt downe the ſoule, but alſo to caſt away the ſoule by a tempeſt of Gods wrath. When we find our ſelves to bee innocent from great offences, and acquitted from regarding iniquity, wee muſt with patience wait upon the Lord: How

Ioſh. 7.

Rom.11. verse,33.34.

Iob 11.

Deut.32.39.

Iob 2.10.

Phil.4.12.

How unsearchable are his iudgements, and his wayes past finding out? For who hath knowne the minde of the Lord? Loe hee goeth by me, and I see him not; Hee passeth on also, but I perceive him not. Behold hee taketh away, who can hinder him? Hee woundeth, and hee healeth; hee bringeth low, and hee lifteth up. Shall wee receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall wee not receive evill? Have wee learned to abound and be full of spirituall comfort, and have we not learned to suffer need, and be abased in the sense of our wants, and confession of our unworthinesse, who are lesse than the least of all his mercies? God will have us

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to ſee that wee are not able to merit any of his bleſſings, which are wholly in his own diſpoſing: It is not in man that walketh, to direct his ſteps: There may bee many devices in his heart, nevertheleſſe the counſell of the Lord that ſhall ſtand. Alſo wee muſt know that wee are now in our paſſage through the vaſt wilderneſſe of this troubleſome world, unto the heavenly Canaan: And we were of all men moſt miſerable, if our greateſt comforts were not reſerved for a better life. God doth firſt caſt us downe, and then raiſe us up to a glorious eſtate: Though wee walke in the midſt of trouble, hee will revive us: Light is ſowne for the

Ier. 10 23.

Pro. 19. 21.

Psal.138.7. & 97. 11.

the righteous, and gladneſſe for the upright in heart. That

1. Cor.15. verse 36.

which thou ſowest is not quickned except it dye first: So although wee ſeeme to be without the life of ioy, yet we hope to reape everlasting conſolation: As ſorrowfull

2. Cor.6.10.

wee alwayes reioyce. There is an outward apparence of griefe; There is an inward ſubſtance of true ioy: But I may well deſiſt from ſpeaking of this ſadneſſe, whereof wee can give no reaſon; when there are ſo many cauſes of heavineſſe, whether we looke upon the ſinnes of other men with charitable compaſſion, or upon our own offences with ſorrowfull compunction: How did Da-

Psal 119. 136.

vid lament for the tranſgreſ-

ſions

ſions of the people? And may not we take up the complaint of the Prophet; From the ſole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſſe in it? How great is the number of them that have ſold themſelves to worke wickedneſſe? and never thinke of their redemption by Him, who paid the ranſome for us; whoſe bodies ſerve them for pleaſure, and their ſoules are as a burthen; ſuch a burthen as will bee greater than they can beare, ready to ſinke them to the pit of deſtruction: Yet who doth repent of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, What have I done? Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battell: Which of

Iſai.1.6.

Quibus contra naturam corpus voluptati, anima oneri fuit, Saluſt.

Ier.8.6.

of them doth ſearch their heart by the light of the Word, as with a candle? and ſay, as juſtly they may, inverting theſe words of David, Why art thou not caſt down, O my ſoule, and why art thou not diſquieted within mee? Wherefore, leaving them unto this examination, let us reflect upon our ſelves, and as the Circle, which doth returne upon it ſelfe, is the ſtrongeſt and moſt capacious figure; and may bee reſembled by the ſhape of a mans body; So if wee doe returne unto our ſelves, and ſearch our owne hearts, wee ſhall become more ſtrong and capable of grace. The opinion of Ariſtotle is to bee preferred before that of Plato; The one

Circulus fortitudine, atq; capacitate cæteris figuris præcellit. Clavius.

Vmbilicum eſſe centrum, &c. Iul. Scal.

one held, that our ſight was by receiving the image of the object into the eye: The other, by ſending out thoſe opticke rayes unto the object. It will be our wiſedome to keepe within our owne bounds, and to looke into our ſelves, rather than to exceed in curioſity to diſcover the blemiſhes of other men: Like her, whom they feigned to have uſed her ſight onely when ſhee went abroad; but not when ſhee returned to her owne houſe. Wee ought rather to look into our ſelves with David, who ſeemeth here to ſtrike his hand upon his breaſt, ſaying; Why art thou full of heavineſſe, O my ſoule? God onely knoweth the hearts of all the children

Viſio fit recipiendo. Ariſt. Emittendo ſpiritum animalem, Plato, Keckerm.

Lamia ſu vimincum cophinum oculos exemptiles inſpiciebat. Eraſmus.

of men; but by this private search, every man may know the sore, and the griefe, and the plague of his owne heart; and may find that his soule is cast downe, when it is surcharged with thorny cares, which choke the good seed, and maketh him to become unfruitfull. Can that souldier fight the good fight of faith, who intangleth himselfe with the things of this life? Woe to him that ladeth himselfe with thicke clay: Such a man may in vaine beate the ayre, but hee cannot runne with patience unto the race that is set before him; unlesse hee doth cast aside every weight that may hinder him therein. At the time of death wee see how

1. Chron. 6. 28.
1. King. 8. 38.
O curvæ in terris animæ & cœlestium inanes, Persius.
Habak. 2. 6.
Heb 12. 1.

dangerous and offenſive it is, by clamour to interrupt the ſoule in its departure from the body: O that wee could as heedfully practiſe this during our whole life. Every good man, with Saint Paul, doth dye daily; being at all times ready to yeeld up his ſpirit: How prudent ſhould wee bee to avoyd all meanes of diſturbance, that our ſoule may not bee vexed and diſquieted within us; as it is oftentimes through diſtruſt and infidelity, when there is an inward combat betweene the fleſh and the ſpirit, the one luſting againſt the other, and being contrary the one to the other; like Iacob and Eſau ſtrugling in the wombe. Whereas if Chriſt did dwell

1. Cor. 15. 31.

Gal. 5. 17.

Gen. 25. 22.

Ephes. 3. 17.
1. Iohn. 5. 4. 5.

in our hearts by faith, wee ſhould overcome the world, and bee delivered from this vexation. Now we are come to touch upon the true cauſe of Davids heavineſſe; where I ſhould willingly goe backward with Iaphet, and by ſilent charity cover this one infirmity of him, whom, as Saint Matthew joyneth with

Mat. 1. 2.

Abraham, ſo wee may honour as a Father of the faithfull: Yet becauſe that hee teſtifieth as much againſt himſelfe; And his being thus caſt downe may warne thoſe that ſtand by faith, to take heed leſt they fall; and may ſhew unto thoſe that are downe, the way how to riſe againe, I may not without prejudice paſſe it over. David

vid confeſſeth that his feete were almoſt gone, his foot-ſteps were well nigh ſlipt, and his heart was grieved through diſtruſt of Gods providence, when hee ſaw the proſperity of the wicked. In the time of perſecution, he ſaid in his heart, I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Saul: And here being ſurprized by the ſame wavering diffidence, hee ſpeaketh, I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Abſalom: whereas by faith hee might have beene perſwaded, that neither Principalities, nor Powers, nor any other creature ſhould bee able to ſeparate him from the love of God, who will not ſuffer the rod of a wicked ſon to reſt upon the

Pſal. 73. 2. 21.

1. Sam. 27. 1. Labaſcentem & inclinantem ipſius fidem exprimit. Ium.

Rom. 8. 38.

Pſal.125. Rom.25.3. Phil.2.3. Rom.11,24.

lot of a righteous father. Wherefore let us not pleaſe our ſelves by any vaine conceits of our owne ability; but in lowlineſſe of minde eſteeme holy David much better than our ſelves. If this naturall branch, ſo deepely rooted and eſtabliſhed in all graces, was yet notwithſtanding thus toſſed and carried about by the winde of infidelity, in this dreadfull ſtorme of Gods diſpleaſure; then how ſhould wee poore unſtable ſoules (who were wild by nature, and are now graffed into the good olive tree) feare and tremble, leſt when the winds doe blow, and temptations ariſe, wee (who have not by faith laid ſure hold, that wee might partake

of

of the root) bee broken off from continuing in the goodneſſe of God? And yet how doe wee live like the people of Laiſh, at quiet, and ſecure, not fortifying againſt the aſſault of the enemy? In this our day of liberty and viſitation, the things that belong to eternall peace are hid from our eyes, which are dazeled with the bright ſun ſhine of proſperity; ſo that our ſight is imperfect, like unto the blind mans, who ſaw men as trees, walking: But when Chriſt made him looke up the ſecond time, hee ſaw every man clearely. At firſt ſight wee thinke our ſelves to bee as ſtrong as the oake, but when God doth breake us with a tempeſt, or wee doe

Iudg. 18 27

Luk. 19 41.

Mark. 8 24.

Iob.9.17. frequently looke up in prayer, to have our darkeneſſe inlightened, wee then come to diſcerne plainely, that wee are fraile men, & our ſtrength
Iob 6.3.12. is not the ſtrength of ſtones, nor our fleſh of braſſe: yea then wee complaine that our griefe is heavier than the ſand of the ſea, and our ſoules are caſt downe within us. Now the ſame graces doe both prevent and cure this infirmity of the ſoule: By faith wee are kept from this
Pro.31.21. diſcouragement. The prudent woman is not afraid of the ſnow, for all her houſhold are clothed with ſcarlet: So they that are of the houſhold of faith, and have their garments dipt in the bloud of the Lamb, ſhall not need to

feare

feare the winter of perſecution and trouble: Alſo ſuch as have beene overtaken in a fault, and are ready to faint through weakneſſe; yet if their hope bee firme, they ſhall recover: And God will reſtore them to the joy of his ſalvation. As the Angel ſtood by Paul in the night, after hee had beene exceedingly toſſed with a tempeſt, when the ſun in many dayes had not appeared, and aſſured him of a gracious deliverance: So our hope doth ſtand by us in our greateſt perplexity, when the Lord doth ſeeme to hide himſelfe, and withdraw the beames of his mercy, and ſealeth unto our ſoule, that notwithſtanding our preſent calamity,

Act. 27. 23.

Aſſidue nos tamus inter ſpem metuſque flu ctus. Lipſius.

Revel. 10. 8.

He will make his face, which is as it were the Sunne, to shine upon his servants: And

psal. 3. 2. 16.

wee shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. The enemies of David, seeing him in misery, were ready to say, That there is no help

& 3. 2. & 41. 8.

for him in God; and now that hee lieth, hee shall rise up no more: So our corrupt nature being the greatest adversary, doth suggest unto us when the soule is cast downe, it is a signe that it is cast out of the sight and favour of God; When it is disquieted it is a fore-runner of despaire, by reason of our grievous sinnes: as for our hope, it is

Plane dicebat, spes vigilantium hominum esse somnia,

but the dreame of men waking; and as hee that thinketh hee eateth is hungry when hee

hee awaketh: ſo thou thinkeſt to be ſuſtained by hope, which in the end will vaniſh away. Call to mind thy former ſinnes, which have cryed for vengeance: looke upon thy preſent afflictions, and acknowledge thou doſt receive the due reward of thy deeds: Then what place is left for hope of deliverance? Why ſhouldeſt thou adde to thy ſufferings by thine expectation of freedome? Can the Divine juſtice, ſo highly incenſed, bee ſo ſoone appeaſed? Shall not the God of truth bee juſt and righteous in multiplying his judgements upon thee, who wouldeſt for ever have multiplied thy ſins againſt him? What hope of favour to be ſhewed

ed unto thee, who haſt deſerved ſo great wrath, and haſt not merited the leaſt mercy? Doth not thine owne conſcience accuſe thee, and thy ſins beare witneſſe againſt thee? and ſhall not the Iudge of all the world doe right in thy condemnation? Haſt thou not ſerved ſinne, and muſt therefore receive the wages of unrighteouſneſſe, death and deſtruction? Now in this combate, the beleever is armed with hope of ſalvation for an helmet: with faith for a ſhield and breaſt-plate, wherewith hee is able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked: Being ſtung by the old Serpent, and feeling both the guilt and ſmart of his ſinnes, hee looketh with the eyes

1. Theſ. 5. 8. Ephes. 6. 16.

eyes of Faith and Hope unto Chriſt Ieſus, being lifted up; who powreth wine and oyle into our wounds, and makes us inwardly glad, outwardly cheerefull, and then doe we praiſe him for the help of his countenance. What a great encouragement is it to the ſervant, when his Maſter doth looke upon him in the conflict? And though in ſtriving wee ſometime take a foyle; yet then the Lord doth turne and looke upon us as he did upon Peter: and being ſorrowfull for our infirmity, wee become ſtrong. Alſo in our heavineſſe, either for ſinnes paſt or preſent miſery, the Lord doth behold us as hee did his ſervant David, delivering us out of all

Luke 22. 61.

afflicti-

afflictions: And in the performance of holy duties hee
Ioh.1 48. seeth us as he did Nathaneel, sending his grace to prevent, accompany, and follow us. Lastly, when that which is
1.Cor.13.12. perfect is come, wee shall with Paul see him face to face: Truly the light is sweet,
Eccles.11.7. and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun: If this outward light bee so delightfull, then what an ex-
Num.6. verse 25.26. cellent blessing is it, when the Lord doth make his face to shine upon us, and is gracious unto us, and doth lift up his countenance upon us? That wee may obtaine this benediction, wee must bee obedient unto his Word: When
Psal.27.8. hee saith, Seeke yee my face: Our heart must answer, Thy face

face Lord will I ſeeke: Not for a ſhort time, but continually. And though a man beholding his naturall face in a glaſſe goeth away, & ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of man hee was; yet wee, when the Lord hath in mercy revealed himſelfe unto us, muſt not forget his beneſits, but ever bee mindfull of his gifts that are without repentance; and alwayes praiſe him for the help of his countenance. Wee cannot expect deliverance out of trouble, unleſſe God doth helpe us; and when wee have received many bleſſings, wee ſhall neither deſire, nor yet bee able to praiſe him, without the helpe of his countenance: So that God doth provide both

& 103.4.

Iam.1.17.

both the altar and the ſacrifice; Hee freely beſtowes his benefits, and he doth enable us to offer our thankeſ-giving, and to praiſe him for the help of his countenance.

VERSE VI.

O my God, my ſoule is caſt down within mee.

Mat. 17. 15. WHen the diſciples could not cure him that was lunaticke, they bring him to Chriſt himſelfe: So when David could not by his owne endeavours caſt out this ſpirit of heavineſſe, hee ſeeketh unto the Lord of life, to ſpeake the word, and this diſeaſe of his ſoule ſhall bee healed. Hee recovered his life of com-

fort;

fort by a ſtedfaſt hope in Gods mercy, which hee laboured for in the former verſe, yet then hee muſt have confeſſed, that it was the grace of God whereby it was effected; But that which is obtained by prayer, doth come more immediately from Gods right hand; and for ſuch bleſſings wee are moſt thankfull: Wee come with confidence unto the throne of grace, when wee have uſed, and doe uſe all good meanes to recover ſtrength and aſſurance. Doth God bid us doe ſome great thing? we doe it willingly: Doth hee command ſome ſmall thing? therein alſo we yeeld our cheerefull obedience. I cannot give ſufficient teſtimony

teſtimony unto theſe two, ſo excellent duties, ſerious examination of the ſoule, and fervent praier unto the Lord: The former like Mount Sinai, full of terrour, when by looking into our ſelves, wee feare and tremble, becauſe of our guiltineſſe, having offended againſt the lawes of God: The latter, like Mount Sion, bringing conſolation through Ieſus the Mediator of the New covenant, whoſe bloud ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel. In the right performance whereof, our griefe is aſſwaged; if we proſtrate our ſelves before the Lord in prayer, hee will raiſe up our ſoules with ſpirituall comfort. This is the beſt refuge of every beleever, whereby

Heb. 12.

whereby he hopeth for theſe ſure mercies of David: And this is the Sanctuary of a Chriſtian, from whence hee cannot bee taken, and wherein hee ſhall not periſh. Our ſorrow may often cauſe us to call upon the Lord, but the ſoule is never caſt downe ſo low, as to bee wholly diſabled from prayer: Being of a ſorrowfull ſpirit, though wee cannot expreſſe our miſery, yet wee can ſpeake in our heart unto the Lord. David being dejected by griefe and heavineſſe, doth yet lift up his ſoule in prayer, and beleeves that God is his God, though now hee ſeemed to forſake him. When the winde doth blow wee wrap our garments more cloſe

cloſe about us; in trouble wee draw neere unto God, and labour to apply his promiſes unto our ſoules: The childe walking in the darke doth adhere unto his father, and takes hold upon him, that hee may guide him, and preſerve him from danger: So wee in the moſt diſconſolate eſtate doe cleave unto the Lord, and repoſe our whole confidence in his love. Our Author in ſpeaking of God and his ſoule, doth thus plead for himſelfe; Thou art my God, and I am thy ſervant: Let the wicked bee clothed with ſhame and diſhonour, let their heart dye within them, But redeeme my ſoule that I may not bee deſolate, becauſe I truſt in thee.

thee. Deliver mee from all my feares, and thou Lord ſhalt bee magnified, which haſt pleaſure in the proſperity of thy ſervant. My ſoule is thy gift, it came from thee, and I have given it unto thee. How can it aſcend towards thee, when it is thus preſſed downe by manifold troubles? The waters are come in unto my ſoule: I ſinke in deepe mire, where there is no ſtanding. My ſoule abiding in this darke houſe of earth, lyeth proſtrate upon the ground, and is not able to riſe: Lord heare the poore, and deſpiſe not thy priſoner. Let thy ſalvation, O God, ſet mè up on high, let thy light and thy truth lead mee, and bring mee unto thy holy hill,

Pſal. 69. 1, 2.

hill, and to thy tabernacles.

VERSE VI.

Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Iordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Misſar.

ANother help which David uſed to ſuſtaine himſelfe in this time of trouble, was by calling to minde the goodneſſe of the Lord in the land of Iordan, where God provided a paſſage for the Iſraelits, & preſerved him when he paſſed over to ſhun Saul: So now going over the river, hee hoped that God would make a way for him to eſcape the danger that might come by Abſalom. Whereas hee nameth the land of Iordan,

Ioſh. 3.

2. Sam. 17. 22.

dan, and of the Hermonites, he ſuggeſteth to our remembrance the victory which God gave unto his people, when they tooke the land that was on this ſide Iordan, from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon; at which time Og, who was of the remnant of the giants, was overthrowne: And thereby his hope might bee confirmed, that although high-minded Abſalom was ſwoln with proud conceits, and girding on his harneſſe did boaſt himſelfe as if hee had put it off; yet the right hand of God was not ſhortned, nor his power diminiſhed: But hee will ſave and deliver all them that put their truſt in him. Now theſe three places

Deut. 3. 8.

2. King. 20. 11.

ces here mentioned, being the bounds of that countrey inhabited by the Israelites, Iordan towards the East, Hermon the North, and the hill Missar the South; hee might from thence have this comfortable assurance, that God who was pleased to give unto his people so fruitfull a land after their tedious passage through the wildernesse, would likewise in mercy give him all good blessings needfull for him, after hee had waded through these troubles which hee now endured. In the meane while being deprived of his former liberty of worshipping the Lord in the assembly of the Saints, hee doth stirre up the gifts and graces that were in him,

him, by remembring the goodneſſe of God; and the bleſſings which he had received. In ſo doing, he becomes a good example unto all them, that are robbed of that bleſſed meanes of comfort which they formerly enjoyed; and unto all inhabitants of villages, which in the old law were counted as the fields of the countrey; And (as too frequently) wanting a faithfull watch-man, are more expoſed to the treacherous aſſaults of the enemy, than Cities environed with Gods favour, and enriched with the pledges of his love; that they would provide againſt the worſt famine, and keepe thoſe things which have beene committed unto

Levit. 25. 31

2. Tim. 1 14. & 1. Tim. 6, 19. them, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come; that they may lay hold on eternall life. As Paul gave direction for the collection of the Saints, that every one upon the firſt day of the weeke, ſhould lay by him in ſtore as God hath proſpered him: So wee for the furtherance of the worke of our ſanctification, in our firſt dayes, which wee ought to remember to keepe holy in remembrance of our Creator; while wee reſide in places that are enlightened with Gods favour, ſhould lay up againſt

Dan 6. 10. the time of want; that as Daniel prayed and gave thankes unto God, his windowes being open in his chamber towards

wards Ieruſalem; So wee looking unto the former part of our lives, may bee excited to prayer and thankeſgiving. He is a wiſe ſonne that gathereth in ſummer, laying up knowledge and keeping inſtruction. Salomon might juſtly produce the Ant gathering her food in harveſt, thereby to convince the ſlothfulneſſe of moſt men; when the leaſt and meaneſt of the creatures ſhall exceed man in prudence: And ſurely moſt men if they ſhould rightly conſider of the former part of their lives, they could not with David here remember God in ſo doing, for God is not in all their thoughts, nor his feare before their eyes. Their dayes

Pro 10.5.14. & 6.8.

Pſal.10.4.

have beene few, but the evils therein committed very many: Where the youth is vaine, the age is like to bee unprofitable, when nothing shall be left but the lees and dregs of our life. As Catiline desired the acquaintance of young men, who being pliable were soone taken with his fraudulent baits; So Satan laboureth to bring such unto destruction: and when the strong man doth get possession in time of strength, he is not readily cast out. It is an hard thing to pare off those vices which have grown up together with our selves: Wherefore let us so order and dispose of this instant time, in doing good, that the use which wee make there-

Eorum animi molles, & ætate fluxi, dolis haud difficulter capiebantur. Salust.

Difficulter reciduntur vitia quæ nobiscum creverunt. Senec.

thereof may bee beneficiall unto us for the preſent, and cõfortable in remembrance hereafter.

Whereas David remembreth God from theſe places here named; we may collect, That if we be well affected, there is no place, wherein we may not be put in mind of the bounty, and goodneſſe of God: Whoſe eyes runne to and fro, throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelfe ſtrong in the behalfe of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him. And as Ioſeph in a place of pleaſure provided againſt death, which at firſt ſprung up in a garden: So thoſe places which in themſelves are moſt delightfull, may by our good im-

2. Chro. 16. 9.

proovement become most profitable: whereof I may have occasion to treat hereafter if it shall please God to give life and ability. In Christs Kingdome every valley shall be exalted, and every mountaine shall be brought low: The Lord is God of the hills, as of Hermon and Missar; as also of the plaine, as this land of Iordane: From the valley which adjoyneth to the river, (where fishes grow into a multitude) and is thereby made the more fruitfull, we may learne to be humble, & God will give grace unto us: And by the hills we may be put in mind, of Abraham his offering up his sonne upon a mountaine; of Christ his transfigu-

Isai. 40 4.

1. King. 20. 28.

Gen. 48. 16.

& 22. 2.

transfiguration upon an high mountaine, of his frequent praying upon Mount Olivet, and at laſt his aſcenſion upon the ſame Mount: Which may inſtruct us to offer up the ſacrifice of our prayers unto God, that he would make us inwardly glorious, and in the end receive us into his heavenly kingdome. If we lift up cleane hands & a pure heart, we ſhall aſcend into his holy hill: The Pſalmiſt doth firſt ſpeake of the land of Iordan and then of Hermon and Miſſar, ſhewing the low eſtate whereinto he was now brought, when the waters were ready to overwhelme him, and the ſtreame to goe over his ſoule. But then having confidence in

Mat. 17.
Luk. 22. 39.
Act. 1. 12.

remembring Gods mercy, he
Psal. 23. will feare no evill though he
walke through the valley of
36. 6. the shadow of death: Thy
judgments are as a great
deepe, thy righteousnesse
like the great mountaines;
65. 6. God who by his strength set-
teth fast the mountaines,
which bring peace to the
people, will establish and
support his children, and give
them a good issue out of all
their trialls.

As a man that thinkes hee hath escaped the perill of water being come unto the shoare, and yet is presently beaten back by the tenth wave, and brought into his former estate of daunger: So David who began to be refreshed in remembring Gods love,

love, is now again overtaken with sorrow: When,

VERSE VII.

Deepe calleth unto deepe at the noyse of thy water spouts; All thy waves and thy billowes are gone over mee.

DUring our whole life there is a continuall ebbing and flowing; And this time of Davids affliction is like a double tide, wherein new troubles did arise, before the other were past away: If hee found a short time of release, it was like a fayre day in winter, which we use to say doth breed towle weather afterward. That strength which he then recovered did enable him to undergo

thoſe calamities which ſhould come upon him. But for the moſt part, in this time of chaſtiſement, there was no other voyce heard, but that of the flying Angel, which ſaid; Woe, woe, woe; as if God, who afterward did ſmite the people for the ſin of the King, ſhould now ſmite the King for the tranſgreſſions of all the people. As in Iobs tryall, while one meſſenger was ſpeaking, another came bringing ſad tidings; ſo here, before one calamity was paſt, another cauſe of ſorrow did afflict him: To bee caſt out of the city where hee lived; To be expelled out of his kingdome wherein he governed, as unworthy to come within the

Revel. 8. 13.

Iob 1. 14. 15, 16.

the borders of it: and yet God had promiſed that his throne ſhould bee ſtabliſhed for ever; and when his daies ſhould bee fulfilled, his ſeed ſhould bee ſet up after him, but not before him (as Abſalom deſired, building his houſe upon his fathers ruine;) Then to have his concubines defiled in the ſight of all Iſraell: And all this not by an enemy, for then he could have borne it more patiently; but by his owne ſonne: And one meſſenger brings word, that the hearts of the men of Iſrael are after Abſalom; Another tels him, that Ahitophel the Kings Counſellor was among the conſpirators: Moreover Shimei doth vex his righteous ſoule

ſoule with malicious reproaches. Now what could bee done more, that was not done to make the meaſure of his ſorrow, to bee preſſed down in heavineſſe of ſoule, and running over in the outward expreſſiō of his griefe? How great and manifold are the dangers of them that goe downe to the ſea in ſhips, that ſee the workes of the Lord? For he commandeth and raiſeth the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof: They mount up to heaven, they goe downe againe to the depths: So here, Deepe calleth unto deepe; David is expoſed to the greateſt perils that may be. The windowes of heaven are opened, as in the floud: There is the noiſe of

l Pſal. 107. 26.

Gen. 7. 11.

of thy water-ſpouts; but no Arke of deliverance like Noahs; no not ſo much as that little Arke of Moſes, whereby he may hope to be drawn out of theſe miſeries. There is a mighty tempeſt, but no ſhip to defend him; nor yet any ſigne of a calme, as to the Mariners; neither any creature to waft him to the ſhore, as Ionah had: There is a boyſtrous winde, that made the billowes to goe over him; but the helping hand of the Divine providence is not ſtretched out to uphold him, as unto Peter. The flouds over-flow him, the proud waters goe over his ſoule: Hee is caſt into the deepe, and all thy waves are upon him: Not one wave alone, but many

Exod 2.3.

Ionah 1.4.

Mat. 14.30.
Pſal 69.2.
& 124.5.

Ionah 2.3.

ny, but all of them. There was such a variety of his crosses, and such a succession of his trouble; that as the day was prolonged untill such time as Ioshuah had subdued his enemies; so here the night of his misery was doubled, untill such time as God had perfected the work of humiliation in him. God, who is most perfect, will finish every good worke that hee hath begun in any of his children: And being the author of time, hee disposeth of all things for our good, making us strong when wee are weake; so that wee may take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake. And by seeing our

2. Cor. 12. 10.

our miſerable and weake eſtate, wee learne not to truſt in our ſelves, but in God who raiſeth the dead. When the water of affliction doth flow over our head, we are thereby cleanſed, that we may be preſented unto Chriſt without ſpot and blemiſh: As Pharaoh and his hoſt were covered by the depths, and ſanke into the bottome, as a ſtone; ſo they that want faith to ſtand in temptation, are ready to be ſwallowed up of deſpaire. But every one that is godly hath this comfortable protection; That in the flouds of great waters, they ſhall not come nigh unto him; and though the flouds of ungodly men make him afraid, though he be compaſſed

Exod. 15. 5.

Pſa. 32. 6. & 124.

ſed about with many tribulations, yet out of the depth of
Pſal.130.1. his miſery hee cryeth unto the depth of Gods mercy; and prayeth unto the Lord
& 91.4. on high, who is mightier than the noyſe of many waters; yea than the mighty waves of the ſea, to deliver him from them that hate
& 79.14.15. him, that the water-floud may not over-flow him, nor the deepe ſwallow him up: And in concluſion hee finds this comfort, that neither
Rom.8.39. height nor depth ſhall bee able to ſeparate him from the love of God. When Chriſt was aſleepe in the ſhip that
Mat.8.26. ſailed over unto the other ſide of the lake, there came downe a ſtorme, inſomuch, that the ſhip was covered with

with the waves: but when the diſciples awoke him, hee ſaid, Why are yee ſo feareſull, O yee of little faith; and rebuking the ſea, there was a great calme: So in our voyage to heaven, when the winde doth blow, the raine doth fall, and the waves doe beate upon us; In ſtrong temptations, when wee are oppoſed on every ſide, and looking up to heaven, ſee nothing but the terrour of Divine juſtice ready to fall upon us; looking downe, wee ſee the horror of the pit ready to ſhut her mouth upon us; and looking about, wee ſee all the creatures armed for our deſtruction, then through want of ſtrength we are ready to ſinke under the bur-

burthen of our calamities: But when the quickning ſpirit ſhall revive our faith, that ſlumbred within us, and reſtore us to the life of grace, wee begin to bee comforted, in aſſurance that God will put an end to our trials, and deliver us out of all affliction: Such was Davids anchor which he caſt out now in this ſtorme, and thereby hoped for ſafety. Though the waves and billowes doe goe over me,

VERSE VIII.

Yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſſe in the day time, and in the night his ſong ſhall bee with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

As

AS before his teares were his meate day and night; So now hee finds cauſe of rejoycing both day and night; for the loving kindneſſe of the Lord who did put ſongs of praiſe into his mouth: His miſery and trouble were now preſent before him; His comfort was only hope, but not to bee diſcerned by ſenſe and reaſon: Yet ſuch was the ſtrength of his confidence, which he had fixed upon Gods love, that thereby he became as fully aſſured of deliverance, as if he were already reſtored to his former liberty. The wicked ſhall feare day and night; in the morning he ſhall ſay, Would God it were Even, and at Even he ſhall ſay, Would

Verſe 3.

Deut. 28. 66, 67.

Would God it were morning: And his greateſt woe, ſhall then begin, when time ſhall be no more: But the
Luke 2.37. righteous that like Anna ſerve God night and day, ſhall at all times be refreſhed by truſting in Gods mercy: who will command his loving kindneſſe in the day time; as He hath promiſed to command the bleſſing up-
Deut. 28.8. on them that obſerve his Lawes: And we know that all things obey the voyce of God. Hath he ſpoken, and
Mat. 8.9. ſhall he not performe it? Do the ſouldiers come when the Centurian calleth, and ſhall not all creatures be ready preſt to doe the will of God? Though his loving kindneſſe be as it were unwilling

ling to come and reveale it ſelfe unto us, that have ſo highly offended; yet when God commandeth, it muſt yeeld obedience: Yea he ſo commandeth, as that we may therein diſcerne his favour vnto vs: He ſends the Angel to comfort Hagar, in her diſtreſſe: And he commands his kindneſſe, which is as his meſſenger bringing glad tidings of great joy unto his children.

His kindnes is not without love: The tender mercies of the wicked are cruell, but the chaſticements of God doe proceed from his love: And if our chaſticements, then much more his kindneſſe: He is a Father of mercies; they are as naturall and as deare

Pro. 12. 10.

deare unto him as a ſonne to his father; And though a mother ſhould forget her child, He will never forget his love to his children.

Mat. 5 45. Our heavenly Father cauſeth the ſunne to riſe on the evill, and on the good, and ſendeth raine on the juſt and on the unjuſt: He is kind unto the unthankfull and evill.

Luke 6. 35.

2 Sam. 10. 2. But as Hanun uſed the meſſengers of David diſdainfully, when he thought to ſhew kindneſſe unto him: So wicked men doe abuſe the goodneſſe of God, and pervert it unto their owne deſtruction: But they that are indued with wiſedome from above, doe ſing praiſe unto his holy name, and doe pray unto the God of their life,

for

for the continuance and increaſe of all his bleſſings.

The Lord will command his loving kindneſſe in th day time, by reſtoring him to his former liberty of appearing before God: And after he had in an holy manner performed the duties of the day; he did in the night meditate upon the lawes of God, and rejoyce in the gracious benefits which he had received: The day is made for man to labour. It was the punishment upon Adam and his poſterity, to eate their bread in ſorrow all the daies of their life: Yet through the goodneſſe of God, we receive many bleſſings therein. It is a time of ſalvation vnto us, if we dothe works of righteouſneſſe

Gen. 3. 17. Labor exoritur durus & cuncta agitat curas, &c. Senec.

teousneſſe while it is day,
1.Pet.3.10. and labour to know thoſe
things which belong unto
our peace: If we deſire to
2.King.3.14. ſee good dayes we muſt eſ-
Deut.30.20. chew euill and doe good:
Then the Lord will lengthen
our dayes, yea he himſelfe
will be our life and the
length of our daies: Where-
& 11.19. fore let us ever remember
the love of God, and ſpeake
to the praiſe of his name:
not only when we riſe up in
the day, but when we lye
downe in the night; Then to
call to remembrance our
ſong as David did, who re-
Pſal 77.6. membred God upon his bed,
& 63.6. and did riſe at midnight to
& 119.62. giue thanks, whoſe eyes pre-
.48 & 139.18. vented the night watches, &
when he awaked he was ſtill
with

with him: And howſoever the ſons of perdition do turn night into day, whoſe evill conſcience hateth the light, and being by darkneſſe robbed of all ſhame, doe ſcorne the day ſo freely given unto them, And are drunken in the night, committing all kinde of wickedneſſe and uncleanneſſe therein: Forgetting that the darkneſſe hideth not from God, but the night ſhineth as the day; the darkneſſe and the light are both alike to him: Yet they that are godly doe receive much ſtrength and conſolation in the night, to the refreſhing both of ſoule and body. It did diſcover the timorous weakneſſe of Nicolemus, to come unto Chriſt

1. Theſ. 5. 7.

Quippe omnem pudorem nox ademerat. Tacit. Gravis malæ conſcientiæ lux eſt. Faſtidio eſt lumen gratuitum. Senec.

Pſal. 139. 12.

Nox fœcundo operum pulchrǽque accommoda fraudi. Stat.

Nox hominum genus, & duros miserat labores. Val. Flac.

by night; But it sheweth our holy confidence, then to sing praise unto the Lord; and with our soule to desire him in the night, yea with our spirit within us to seeke him early: In former times God appeared vnto his servants in visions of the night; and therein revealed his good will vnto them: God came to Abimelech by night, and withheld him from sinning: And surely we may make a profitable use of our dreames in the night, whereby many times God sheweth us the great corruption of our deceitfull hearts, wanting his grace to make resistance unto the assaults of Satan, who will not give us any time to rest from his temptations: But as

Isai. 26.9.

Gen. 20.3.

Iob 33.15,16.

as that great Commander did ſodainly come upon the enemy, by marching diverſe nights; ſo hee doth then beſet us, and ſeekes to wound us, by caſting his fiery darts, evil thoughts into our hearts: Sometime we offend by carnall affections, ſometime by uncharitableneſſe, carefull thoughts, and vaine imaginations. My reines alſo inſtruct me in the night ſeaſons; and ſuch a night requires a ſong of lamentation: But when the Lord hath proved our heart, and viſited us in the night, and hath tryed us, and ſhall find nothing; then may wee have a ſong in the night, and gladneſſe of heart, as when an holy ſolemnity is kept. There is great cauſe of

Marius in Saluſt. bel. Iugur.

Pſal. 16. 7. Dicetur merita nox quoq; Nenia Horat.

Pſal. 17. 3.

Iſai. 30 29.

joy, for that the Lord doth refreſh and ſuſtain us by quiet ſleepe, after we have beene wearied with the evill of the day: And as hee giveth reſt after labour, ſo hee giveth eaſe and deliverance after affliction and trouble. In the night, a light ſhined unto Peter in the priſon, and the Angel of the Lord raiſed him, when hee was ſleeping betweene two ſouldiers, bound with two chaines: So the Lord doth looke graciouſly upon us in our moſt diſconſolate eſtate, when we are environed with many miſeries, and lifts us up by his favour, making away for us to eſcape out of the greateſt dangers. At mid-night, Paul and Silas prayed and ſang praiſes,

Act. 12 7.

and

and immediately, by the earth-quake, all the doores were opened, and every ones bands were looſed. In the midſt of trouble, if our mouth bee opened in prayer, our hearts alſo ſhall bee inlarged in thankeſ-giving: Even in the time of affliction there is cauſe of rejoycing, in that it comes from Gods fatherly love, who maketh us to truſt in him for reliefe after the time of triall. Shall a man that is miſerable delight himſelfe in muſicke? and ſhall not wee bee comforted by ſinging praiſe unto the name of the Lord? Ioſephs brethren thought evill againſt him; but God meant it unto good; that he, being advanced, might preſerve

Act. 16. 25.

philoxenus in Adriano.

Gen. 50. 20.

life: When wee thinke our selves to bee neereſt unto deſtruction, God may then intend our greateſt happineſſe and comfort. As the heaven is high above the earth, ſo the height and depth of his wiſedome and love doe exceed the capacity of our ſhallow underſtanding. Wee are not able to apprehend the manner of his gracious dealing with us: When the Lord
Pſal.126.1. turned againe the captivity of Sion, they were like them that dreame: Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging. The Apoſtle himſelfe in his
Act.12.9. gaole-delivery, wiſt not that it was true which was done, but thought hee had ſeene a viſion. At what time ſoever God

God is pleaſed to inſpire his grace and comfort into us, we ought to rejoyce therein, and by night on the bed to ſeeke him whom our ſoule loveth; abridging that time of reſt and eaſe, that it may become as beneficiall unto us, as the day it ſelfe. David was not ſatisfied by offering the ſacrifice of thankeſgiving in the courts of the Lords houſe, and paying his vowes in the preſence of all the people: But in the night alſo he would continue his ſong of Gods mercy; Like that excellent bird, which is never weary or ſpent by continuing her delightfull notes: So this ſweete ſinger of Iſrael was unceſſant in praiſing the Lord; not giving ſleepe to

Cant. 3. 1.

Circumſcribatur nox, & aliquid ex illa in diem transferatur. Senec.

Pſal. 116. 17.

Siquis adeſt auditor lucis niæ primus ad finem quam cantus deficiet.

his eyes, untill hee had bleſt his holy name. In time of affliction hee made his bed to ſwimme, praying unto the Lord to returne, and deliver his ſoule: Now in proſperity hee gives thankes for the bleſſings hee doth receive. When our bones are vexed, and our ſleep departeth from us, wee pray unto God to deale mercifully with us; But when our diſeaſes are healed, wee doe not returne to give thankes, being ſoone overtaken with heavineſſe and ſecurity: And yet David did endeavour to watch in the night, that hee might ſing praiſe unto the Lord. He did not then onely meditate in the Law of God, when he could not take any reſt, (as Ahaſuerus

Ahaſuerus had the booke of the records of the Chronicles read before him, when hee could not ſleepe;) for now hee might lye downe in peace, and ſleepe, when God made him to dwell in ſafety: Much leſſe did hee intend to procure ſleepe by a ſiniſter performance of any good duty; which notwithſtanding is a corrupt practice of many men, who by ſinging, or reading, or hearing, or meditating, will have an unworthy aime to bring themſelves aſleepe; and yet confeſſing that the enemy is moſt buſied, when they are beſt exerciſed. And therefore David ſaith, Let the Saints ſing aloud upon their beds: Thereby to teſtifie their

Eſther 6. 1.

Pſal. 149. 5.

cheerefull devotion, and alſo to prevent that ſpirit of ſlumber. Such as ſhall thinke to obtaine quiet reſt by performing any ſuch action (in it ſelfe commendable) they doe like unto that people which followed Chriſt, not becauſe of the miracles, but becauſe they were filled with the loaves: So theſe ſeeke him, not that their faith may bee ſtrengthened, but that their bodies may bee refreſhed; The words then uſed by them, being as a charme to gaine their purpoſe. Wee know how dangerous the fall of Eutichus was, and yet he was overcome by a deepe ſleep againſt his will; whereas theſe men doe addreſſe themſelves thereunto, ſtretching

Iohn 6.26.

Acts 20.9.

ching out the arme to welcome sleepe, rather than to declare any fervent zeale. And therefore as their offence is more hainous, so their fall will bee greater. And they also offend in an high nature, who in publike are not able to watch one houre; but doe settle themselves to their repose: With what horror may they feare to be awakened by the sound of the last trumpe, who have despised the voyce of God? And how can they sleepe without suffering many things, because of that lust Man, whom they so unjustly contemne in their neglect of his Word exhibited unto them? This example may be very forcible to convince the

Mat. 27. 19.

the ſluggard that folds his hands to ſleepe: Shall David improve the night to ſo happy an uſe, and wilt thou conſume both day and night in drowſineſſe and ſloth? Alſo this good act here mentioned doth confute them that neglect the frequent uſe of ſo heavenly a duty: Whereas the Apoſtle doth call upon us to ſing with a grace in our heart, making melody unto the Lord. And in former time, Chriſtians were ſo fervent in ſpirit, that they would not forbeare their ſpirituall ſongs in the night, though their lives were brought in danger thereby. But now, excepting that generall exerciſe in the congregation (where there be too many abridgments

Ephes 5 19. Col. 3. 16.

Quod eſſent ſolliti ſtato die ante lucem convenire, eumque Chriſto quaſi Deo dicere ſecum invicem. Plin. Iun.

Vide Tertullian. in Apologet.

abridgments of abridgements) the uſe thereof is not ſo common as it ought to be. In ſome families it is rare, in other it is never thought upon: In Societies and Colledges, where friends meeting privately in the end of the beſt day, perhaps their heart may burn within them while they talke about the Scripture, but yet this holy duty is much omitted; which if it were conſcionably performed in a religious manner, would bring comfort unto the ſoule, by letting the ſervants of God to depart in peace. That hymne which Chriſt ſang with his Apoſtles, may bee a preſident unto all that are in authority, to doe likewiſe.

Luke 24.32.

Mat. 26.30.

David

David saith, that the Lords song shall be with him in the night, And, that the Lord is his strength and his song; which doth confound the foolish love-songs, and unreasonable poems, which are too much in request: Songs in praise of Venus, and the great Diana, to the dishonour of their Creatour, & the shame of the maker; striving to get a name, though it be by their owne confusion: This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings. Of these we may say, as Ronsard spake of the famous Du-Bartas, He hath done more in a day then I have done in my whole life: So David hath done more by this song in the

Psal. 118, 14.

the night, than they by the writings of their whole life: Wherefore let them forbeare any longer to exceed their bounds in looſe dittyes, and wanton catches, whereby youth is ſoone taken; as appeares by the lewd ſongs, ſo common in their night-walks, more harſh to every good eare than the voyce of the raven or any prodigious bird.

VERSE VIII.

And my prayer unto the God of my life.

BEfore he ſpake of the bleſſings received, God commanding his loving kindneſſe in the day time, Of his thankſ-giving for thoſe bleſſings,

blessings, singing praise unto God in the night, And now he betakes himselfe unto Prayer, for the continuance of those blessings, and supply of all graces needfull. Wee see our poore and weake estate in this life: If God withdraw his right hand, we fall and perish: If he stop the fountaine of his mercies, we dye for thirst: Wee cannot say that we are rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; For in our selves wee are wretched and miserable: Going out full in the morning, we may be brought home againe empty in the evening: Having in the day given thanks unto God, who filleth us with his blessings; before night

Revel. 3. 17.

night we pray unto him for our dayly bread: In our thankfull acknowledgment of the benefits we doe enjoy, we humbly pray unto God, to renew his wōted mercies, and to multiply his favours upon us. How can we teſtifie our due valuation of the bounty and goodneſſe of the Almighty, but by aſcribing all glory unto him? when our ſoules doe bleſſe the Lord, and all that is within us doe praiſe his holy name: How can we better declare the ſincerity and devotion of our thankſ-giving, than by our fervent prayer for the increaſe of thoſe graces, for which we deſire to give thanks? He that is in want, may move compaſſion: He that

that is gratefull, will soone obtaine relieſe. Can we preſume to beg any thing of God, not having rightly priced thoſe bleſſings, which we have formerly received from his bountifull hands? David was ſo far from forgetting any benefit, that God had beſtowed upon him, that in this prayer, he doth inſinuate a dutifull remembrance of Gods gracious dealing with him, in that he calleth Him, The God of his life; who breathed into him the breath of life: who in ſickneſſe healed his diſeaſes, and brought up his ſoule from the grave: Who delivered him from the Beare and the Lion, and that lion-like man, Goliah, and that Fox, who ſought

ſought after the blood of this Lambe, and yet, confeſſing him to be innocent: And here from this ravening Woolfe, Abſalom, who in the morning devour'd the prey, ſlew his brother Amnon; And now thought to divide the ſpoyle, by caſting his father out of his throne into his ſepulchre: & laboured to have the Sun turned into darkneſſe, that himſelfe might have ſhined like a blazing meteor; But God was the God of his life: The living, the living he ſhal praiſe thee as I doe this day: Having received ſo great a bleſſing, he doth uſe it to the praiſe of his name: And from Him he hoped for that better life, when this ſhould be

be finiſhed; for which Bathſheba prayed, That the King might live for ever: Our life being a good gift, doth come from the Father of lights: In him we live and move and have our being: And whether we live or dye we are the Lords: Then let us live to his glory, and bee willing to forſake all things to follow Chriſt; and to loſe our lives that we may ſave them at the laſt day: not like the unregenerate, who wil preſerve their lives, though they deſtroy their ſoules; and will keepe their goods, though they ſpend their lives: as Ananias did, being like the figtree, which brought forth the broad leaves of outward profeſſion, whereby hee thought

Act. 5. 5.
Mat. 21. 19.

thought to cover his nakedneſſe, But wanting ſound fruit, he was blaſted by the breath of divine juſtice, and withered away. By this example of David, we may be taught unto whom to direct our prayers: Even unto the God of our life, who hath given us ſo great a bleſſing, & is able to give us all things requiſite for our good: How voyd of all ſenſe, and underſtanding are they, that neglect praying unto the eternall and everliving God? and doe pray unto Saints, which are dead, which never were living; and doe repreſent their prayers unto images, in a language equally unknowne to the idoll and themſelves; They that make them

Gen. 3. 7.

Pſal. 115 8.

them, so is every one that trusteth in them.

VERSE IX.

I will say unto God, My rocke, why hast thou forgotten me? why goe I mourning, because of the oppressions of the enemye?

DAvid doth here premeditate what he should say, when he comes to speake unto the Lord in prayer: And in so doing he becomes a good example unto us, duely to consider our necessity, that we may performe this holy duty with the more reverence, and thereby obtaine the more comfort. As wee use to examin our selves before we come to the Lords supper,

ſupper, where we are made the partakers of the body & blood of Chriſt, So likewiſe we ought to ſearch our hearts before prayer, at which time we partake of the benefit of his ſufferings: And then we must omit vaine repetitions, for we are not heard for our much ſpeaking: A few words with fervency & zeale are better than ten thouſand without importunity & holineſſe. The Phariſee made a great ſound in his prayer, But the Publican like a veſſel full of pretious liquor, ſtrikes himſelfe upon the breaſt, & drawes out theſe few words, God be mercifull to me a ſinner. Our care muſt be to fitt our prayer unto the preſent occaſion, And that eſtate, where-

Mat. 6. 7.

wherein we then are: Sometime the ſoule is lifted up with joy, and then there is cauſe of thankſgiving, and prayſing the name of the Lord for his manifold bleſſings: Sometime it is weighed downe with ſorrow; and then we muſt be humbled in confeſsion of our owne vnworthineſſe, and labour to ſtrengthen our ſelves by truſting in Gods mercyes: All helps are good, that may either aſſiſt us therein, or enable us thereunto: But above al, the Holy Spirit, which teacheth all things, and ſhewth unto every man the griefe of his owne heart, leading him in the way of life; By the which we muſt be guided & inſtructed all the dayes of our

our lives: In compariſon whereof, all other are but blind guides, And not fitted to every particular exigent. Paul being unable to ſee, was led by the hand, But after the ſcales fell from his eyes, he needed no ſuch helpe. And that other blind man cured by Chriſt, being of age was able to ſpeake for himſelfe. They that are ſtrong men in Chriſt, doe poure out their complaint before the Lord: Yea, the new-borne child doth cry, though not able to ſpeake. In the beginning we cry unto the Lord in ſighs and grones: And afterward growing from milke to ſtrong meate (as the flax, which at firſt did but ſmoke, in the end doth burn bright)

Act. 9. 8.

Iohn 9. 11.

wee are able to make expreſſion of our want. When Zacharias his mouth ſhall bee opened, and his tongue looſed, that hee could ſpeake to the praiſe of God, the writing table may bee laid aſide. Naturally wee are all borne with this infirmity; and unleſſe God put forth his hand, and touch our mouth, as hee did Ieremiahs, wee are not able to ſpeake unto him. Let us then covet this excellent endowment, and pray unto God to open our lips, and to touch our tongue with a coale from the altar, that we may obtaine this originall and fundamentall bleſſing, whereby ſo many graces are derived unto us; and wee come to bee built up in our moſt

Luk. 1. 63.

Ier. 1. 9.

moſt holy faith: In our voyage to heaven, take heed of theſe two dangerous rocks; Either to withdraw the ſhoulder, laying the burthen upon others, not ſeeking the bread of life by any ſweat of our owne, but onely as wee wipe it off from the face of other men; Or elſe a cuſtomary and negligent performance of this duty, whereby wee rather quench the ſpirit, than ſtirre up the gift that is in us, that it may ſhine cleerly, for the benefit of others; and burne cheerfully for the comfort of our own ſoules. Nehem. 9. 29. 2. Tim. 1. 6.

Now let us obſerve this reſolution of David; I will ſay unto God: Ought hee not rather to have confeſſed with Iob, That hee was not Iob 9. 3. 15.

able to answer him one of a thousand? And though hee had beene righteous, yet would not answer, but make supplication unto his Iudge: As the Publican would not so much as lift up his eies unto heaven; So, might not he have said, that hee was unworthy to lift up his voyce unto the Lord, and to speake unto him? Who art thou, O man, that replieſt against God? Hath not the potter power over the clay? Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. Are servants commanded to take it patiently, when they suffer for doing well; and shall Gods servants bee impatient, when they are corrected for their faults? as if, like Balaam, He did

Rom. 9. 20.

Isai. 45. 9. 1. Pet. 2. 20.

did ſmite us when wee did not offend againſt him. Alſo where hee complaineth, that he is now forgotten, he ſpeaketh as if God ſhould repent of his love towards him; as Adam, when he thought to juſtifie himſelfe, did impute the blame upon God: So David doth not accuſe himſelfe, who had provoked the Lord by his tranſgreſsions, but ſpeaketh as if God had forgotten to bee gracious, and had rejected him in his diſpleaſure. In the former part, I will ſay unto God, My rocke; There is a ſtrong confidence in Gods mercy, which emboldened him thus to ſpeake: In the latter, Why haſt thou forgotten me? He ſpeakes according to carnall

Num. 22. 28.

Gen. 3. 12.

Iudg.2.3. reaſon, which is as a Canaanite in the land, a thorne in our ſide, not to bee wholly

1.Cor.15.26. conquered, untill the laſt enemy be deſtroyed.

Before you ſaw him panting and thirſting for God; but now he is come to the rocke from whence floweth the water of life: Before the waves and billowes went over him; but now his feet are ſet upon the rocke: For who

Pſal.18.31. is a rocke ſave our God? He

& 62.7. & 94.22. is a rocke of refuge, of ſtrength, of ſalvation. Thus

& 95.1. Hannah calls him in her ſong: There is no rocke like

1.Sam.2.2. our God: Thus Moſes frequently in his ſong, Their

Deut.32.31. rocke is not as our Rocke:

2.Sam.22.47. Thus David in his ſong, Bleſſed be my rocke, and exalted

alted be the God of the rock of my salvation: God who is pleased to call himselfe, I AM; may fitly be described by this title of the Rocke, as being ever the same: Yea more stable and permanent than any rocke; For the rocks have beene rent, but God is immutable, with him is no shadow of change: wherefore let us put our whole trust in God. And as the conies, though a feebl folke, yet are commended as exceeding wise, because they make their houses in the rockes: So it will be our wisedome to build upon this Rocke, that we may not fall, when we are opposed & exalted by the prince of the ayre. The dove is sayd to be

Exod. 3. 14.

Mat. 27 51.

Pro. 30. 26.

Mat 7. 24.

Ephes. 2.

Cant 2.14. in the clefts of the rocke; So let our ſoules, being purified by faith, enter through the wounds of Chriſt, and be united unto him by love. In this appellation here uſed, My Rocke; the Pſalmiſt alludes to Gods favourable dealing with the Iſraelites, whom he relieved by cauſing water to come out of the rocke at Horeb, & Meribah: The remembrance of Gods grace, and love ſhewed unto others, doth bring comfort unto our ſoules: And it is the beſt menes for us to obtaine the bleſsings we want, when we doe magnifie his holy name for his mercy and goodneſſe unto his children, and for the great benefits formerly conferred upon our ſelves

Isai. 2, 10.

Exod. 17.6. Num. 20.11.

ſelves: Not being unmindfull of the rocke of our ſtrength. It was Davids infirmity, having begun in the ſpirit, in calling God his Rocke, thus to end in the fleſh, ſaying, Why haſt thou forgotten mee? Had wee faith as a graine of muſtard ſeed, wee might bee able to remoue mountaines; but it doth diſcouer our unbeliefe, when wee thinke that our Rocke doth forſake us, that our God forgets us: Wee doe, with Ieſurun, forget the Rocke that begat us, the God that formed us; but he never forſakes his ſervants that wait upon him. How often would hee, like the henne, gather us under the wings of his prouidence and mercy?

Iſai. 17.10.

Mat. 17.20.

Deut. 32.18.

Iob 39 14. But when did he, like the Oſtrich, leave us wholly deſtitute of his favour? Shall the man that falleth through his owne weakeneſſe, or is overthrowne by the ſtrength of the winds, and power of the waves, accuſe the Rocke whereon hee ſtood, for inſtability? The Rocke is fixed and ſure, but wee are feeble: yet ſuch is our error, that as in paſſing by water, the eye is ready to apprehend that the rockes doe remove, and the veſſell wherein wee are doth ſtand ſtill: So wee many times doe deceive our ſelves, by thinking that God doth goe from us, when as wee doe runne from him by diſobedience. We have not loved God, but hee us: God hath

1. Iohn 4. 10.

hath not forgotten us, but wee him: Doth David demand, Why haſt thou forgotten me? Might hee not as well have asked, Why haſt thou dealt ſo favourably with mee? There was great cauſe of indignation, but no merit of love. When God tooke him from the ſheepe-coat, from following the ſheepe, and anoynted him King over Iſrael, and delivered him out of the hand of Saul, and gave him his Maſters houſe, and the houſe of Iſrael, and Iudah; and if that had beene too little, hee would have given him ſuch and ſuch things: Having received ſo great bleſſings, hee brought forth the grapes of Sodom in luſt and uncleanneſſe; 2. Sam. 7. 8. & 12. 7.

Iudg 21.

neſſe; making his tranſgreſſion to be like that crying ſin of the men of Gibeah, where adultery and murther were both joyned together: Wherfore it was a juſt judgement of God, to forget him, who had ſo highly offended. And yet in this wee may ſee, that the wayes of God are not like our wayes, nor his thoughts as our thoughts: Wee thinke hee is well pleaſed with us, when hee is moſt angry; and that hee forgets us, when hee begins to looke upon us in mercy. David during the whole yeare that hee ſlumbred in his ſin, thought the time to bee like a jubilee of ioy, wherein all things ſucceeded proſperouſly; but now that God doth puniſh him

him for his iniquity, and like a good ſhepheard, with his rod doth bring home this ſtraying ſheepe, hee thinkes that he is forgotten and caſt out of Gods ſight. Of our ſelves wee are not able to diſcerne Gods fatherly chaſtiſements, and the trials of our faith, from the puniſhment of our rebellion; yea wee thinke that wee doe him good ſervice, when wee provoke him to wrath. Being puniſhed for our ſinnes, wee are ignorant of the cauſe of his anger; unleſſe hee ſhall tell us the cauſe why many are ſicke, and weake, and many ſleepe: For the heart of man is deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it? Being

ing thus ignorant, wee ought to inquire of the Lord, and to pray that hee would shew us the cause, why his anger is kindled against us, and his hand is heavie upon us: As David here, out of a desire to be informed, saith, Why hast thou forgotten me? It seemed strange unto him, that God should forget to be gracious, and that his mercy should be cleane gone for evermore, considering how graciously hee dealt with his people, the Israelites: When they dealt proudly, and refused to obey, thou wert a God, ready to pardon, and forsookest them not; yea, when they made them a molten calfe, yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them

Nehem 9. Verse 16.

17.

18.

them not: When they caſt thy law behinde their backs, and ſlew thy Prophets, and wrought great provocations, 19.
yet in their trouble, when they cryed, thou heardeſt 26.
from heaven & gaveſt them 27.
Saviours. When they had reſt, they did evill againe, yet 28.
many times didſt thou deliver them, and wouldeſt not utterly conſume them: Then why haſt thou forgotten me, O my God? Through the interceſſion of Chriſt we ſhal for ever enjoy the favour and preſence of the Almighty. If
God ſent Lot out of the Gen.19.29.
midſt of the overthrow when hee remembred Abraham, who prayed for Sodom, then we may be aſſured that God will not forget

us

us, having Christ Iesus to be our Mediator.

VERSE IX.

Why goe I mourning, because of the oppression of the enemy?

HAd this man of God spoken no more than he did before, that he was forgotten of his Creator, we might have conceived his estate to bee very disconsolate; But now after the setting of the sunne, to have such horrid darknesse succeed: After he seemed to be forsaken of God, to be thus vexed by the adversary, must needs aggravate his sorrow; when hee went from one place to another, not

not finding eaſe or comfort, firſt to the wilderneſſe, then to the aſcent of Mount Olivet, after that he paſſed over Iordan; not having his head adorned with a diademe, but covered with ſack-cloth, making every place where he came to be like Bochim, a place of weepers: While he was unjuſtly oppreſſed by one, who was an enemy unto God, and to David, and to himſelfe; who, as Iudas ſought to ſhed the bloud of Chriſt, who had formerly waſhed his feet, So Abſalom ſought the deſtruction of his father, who before had waſhed the guilt of blood from him with teares of compaſſion, weeping ſore for the evill done by him, & remitting Iudg. 2. 5.

remitting his great offence, he received him into his bosome; Yet this untamed heifer lift up his heele against him: This is the enemy
Psal.143.3. that hath persecuted his soule, that hath smitten his life downe to the ground, that made him to dwell in darkenesse, as those that have beene long dead. Had God dealt with him as he did with
1.Sam.15.28. Saul, to have rent the kingdome from him, and to have given it to another better than himselfe, he might have endured it with the more patience; Let the righteous
Psal.141.5. smite me, it shall be a kindnesse: But now, that the son of pride should make this humble servant of God to mourne, that the enemy to holinesse

holineſſe ſhould thus afflict the child of Abraham, Gods friend; it muſt cauſe him to walke heavily, and to be full of perplexity: like the Hart which he mentioned in the beginning, which is in daunger to be devoured unleſſe it be refreſhed by the water-brookes; So he is even conſumed by theſe troubles, unleſſe that God, who maketh the lame man to leape as an Hart, be pleaſed to renew his ſtrength, and to put an end to theſe calamities. If we offend againſt God, we ſhall be puniſhed by them that are worſe than our ſelves, who ſhall be as his rod and his hammer for our correction. We cannot thinke thoſe to be veſſells of mercy, who were

2. Chro. 20.7.

Iſai. 35.6.

were the instruments of his wrath against the Israelites, that went mourning by reason of the oppression of the enemy, imposing such heavy burthens upon them in their captivity.

It is our infirmity in time of any crosse, to looke rather unto the hand of him that smote us, than to the divine permission, or our sinnes provoking: No man could have power against us unlesse it were given from above: There is no evill of punishment which God hath not done; our destruction proceeds from our selves: And therefore David, who was unwilling to mourne because of the cruell oppression of an insulting enemy; might

Iohn 19 11.

might yet have prayed unto God to breake his heart, and to give him true ſorrow, that he might lament for his owne ſinnes; whereby he had incenſed Gods diſpleaſure, and by which, asby the moſt tyrannicall enemy, hee was oppreſſed and brought into bondage, when luſt and corruption did ſet up their throne in the heart of him, who was advanced to the kingdome; And were more unſatiable in their exactions, than ever the task-maſters of Egypt, were againſt the diſtreſſed Iſraelites. And his worke was more ſervile, than theirs in the iron fornace, when his ſoule did burne in luſt; and though hee were a King, yet he betrayed the

Deut. 4. 20.

2. Sam. 23. 39.

1 Sam. 18.14. the life of his faithfull subject, yea of one of his Worthyes, altogether unworthy of such an untimely end: And that he might make him sure, As Ioab thrust three darts through the heart of Absalom; So he seekes to kill Uriah thrice; First, to Iudg.14.6. rend him asunder as Samson did the Lion, when he tooke away his wife from him; He 2 Sam. 11.13. put him to a second death, when he made him drunke: And surely drunkennesse may well be called the second death, as being the next way thereunto; And thirdly he caused him to be slaine by the enemy. Now this was a fit time for him to have cried out, Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the

the enemy? when Satan, as afterward in the numbring of the people, ſtood up againſt David, and overthrew him. What greater ſorrow, than for ſinne? What more dreadfull enemy than Satan? What oppreſsion comparable unto that which is undergone by the vaſſals of Satan? whoſe condition is worſe than that of the Gibeonites, who were bondmen, hewers of wood, and drawers of water; or than that of the men of Rabbah, who were put under ſawes, and harrowes of iron, and axes of iron, and were made to paſſe through the brick-kilne: There is no act ſo vile and ſordid, that he doth not put them thereunto; no torment ſo cruell, that he

1. Chro. 21. 1.

Ioſh. 9. 23.

2. Sam. 12. 31.

hee doth not inflict upon them. How circumspect ought wee to bee, that the wicked one may not touch us? and whensoever we are overtaken in a fault, how importunate should wee bee in our prayer unto God, night and day, to deliver us from that thraldome? I am thine, Lord save me, and let thine eare bee attentive unto the
Nehem. 1, 11. prayer of thy servant, who desires to feare thy name. Thou knowest, O Lord, that mine enemy is thine enemy: He first rebelled against thee, and justly suffered thy fierce wrath, by reason of his pride. Hee assaulted our blessed Saviour with diverse and sundry temptations, and would not leave him, untill being vanquished

vanquiſhed hee was commanded to depart: But for ever hee continueth his malice againſt mee thine image; and often, too often hee prevailes againſt mee, ſo that I am brought into ſubiection, and the irons doe enter into my ſoule: Ariſe, O Lord, for my deliverance; Thou haſt bought mee, not with gold and ſilver, but with the bloud of thy Sonne; O then redeeme mee out of this captivity: Why ſhould this traitor deſtroy thy ſubiect, that laboureth in all things to bee faithfull and obedient? Why ſhould Satan vex thy ſervant, that endeavours to doe thy bleſſed will? Why goe I mourning, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy?

Mat. 4. 10.

Pſal. 105. 18.

VERSE X.

As with a ſword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me, while they ſay daily unto me, Where is thy God?

VVHat grievous vexation and anguiſh holy David did endure, by the reproaches of wicked men, may appeare by the deſcription thereof in this Pſalme: Before there was the outward expreſſion in teares; and here is the inward torment, A ſword in his bones. Not ſome little hurt in the skinne onely, nor ſome ſmall wound in the fleſh, but the breaking of the bones; which how deadly it is, may appeare by the practice of the

the Iewes towards them that were crucified. This here mentioned, is not much unlike to that which is ſpoken of the Word of God, being ſharper than any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of the joints and the marrow: But that ſword doth cut downe ſinne from the good, with one edge; and with the other it deſtroyes the ſoule of the ungodly: Whereas this doth wound the righteous, and like an Egyptian reed doth enter into the hand, yea into the ſoule of him that uſeth it. Had they ſpake thus unto him in ſodaine anger, and unadviſed paſſion, hee could the better have endured theſe diſgraces: But their obſti-

Iohn 19. 32.

Heb. 4. 12.

nate continuance in the daily use of it, did discover their inveterate malice, that they were given over to a reprobate sense; and living without God in the world, they did scorn and vilifie all those that put their confidence in him: wherefore hee had iust reason to say, that they were bloudy enemies unto him.

1. Sam. 13. 22. There was a time, when there was no sword found with the Israelites; It were an excellent blessing if now in our Israel, there were none that did strike at the good name of their brethren, by slanderous reports, and uncharitable censures: But as

Gal 4. 29. then, he that was borne after the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the spirit, So it

it is now: Many thinke they cannot better declare their freedome from vice, than by reproching them that are vertuous. A good Chriſtian ſhall have need of the whole ſpirituall armour, that hee may be enabled to withſtand the fierce aſſaults, and to quench the fiery darts of the wicked: He muſt have his loynes girt about with truth, that he be not weakened, and ſhaken by the diſſolute, and railing accuſation that is brought againſt him: He muſt haue the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſſe, to oppoſe againſt their wickedneſſe, and his feet ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace, that he may not runne with them in the crooked paths Eph. 6.

paths leading to destruction: And the Sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, that he may thereby disarme them of these instruments of cruelty. There was a flaming sword, which turned every way, placed to keepe Adam, from reentring into Paradice: These flaming swords, these tongues set on fire from hell, keepe many men from walking in the wayes of godlynesse, and from approching unto the tree of life, Christ Iesus: who wanting a constant and firme resolution, will chuse to halt betweene two opinions, yea to reele to and fro, and stagger like the ship mentioned in the Psalme, in unknowne wayes, rather than

Gen. 3. 24.

Psal. 107. 27.

than with Micaiah, to be ſmitten and reviled for their ſincere profeſſion of the truth. Could that bleſſed Martyr endure the picture of the devill which was put upon his head, and eſteeme it a crowne of glory unto him? And ſhall not we undergoe the termes of diſgrace, caſt upon us by wicked men? which being rightly conſidered, are no other than be uſed in holy ſcripture; So that their ſinne is the greater by the profanation. And it may be our greateſt ſorrow, that we have not attained to be ſuch as they accuſe us to be; Or as we our ſelves deſire to be. Now the ſucceſſe which they ſhall find by this their violent carriage, will be

1. King. 22. 24.

Iohn Hus in Fox.

2 Sam.2.23. no other than Asahel had,
Mat 26.52. who ranne upon his owne
destruction. All they that
take the sword, shall perish
Psal.64.3. by the sword: They whet
their tongue like a sword, but
& 57.15. it shall enter into their owne
hart. They bend their tongue
I:r 9.3. like a bow for lyes; and shoot
Psal.11.2. their arrowes, even bitter
words, at the upright in
& 64.3 7. heart: But God shall shoote
at them with an arrow, so-
& 52.2. dainly shall they bee wound-
ded. Their tongue deviseth
mischiefe like a sharpe rasor,
working deceitfully: But in
& 79.12. the end it will bring them to
torment. They speake evill
of those things they know
Nehem 4.4. not, and persecute the faith-
full; But God will render
seven fold into their bo-
some,

ſome, their reproach, and turne it upon their owne head: We may demand the cauſe of this their inquiſition, Where is thy God? He might have asked them one queſtion, Will ye alſo be his diſciples? Had they intended to have taken his yoke upon them, David would willingly have inſtructed them in the way, yea hee would have beene their guide; Come and ſee Him, who hath told me all things that I know, and knoweth all things that ever I did; is not this the only true God? But they meant to honour him no otherwiſe than Herod thought to worſhip Chriſt, when he enquired diligently after him: He hoped to have

John 9.27.

& 4.29.

Mat. 2.7.

killed the Lord of life, and they purpose to doe no lesse,
Mat.26.55. comming out with swords, as against a theefe; though they aime at the members, yet they smite the head it
Ac.9.4.5. selfe in their persecution: What is done to one of those little ones, is done unto Christ; and what is done to Christ, is done to one of them. A servant of God cannot heare His holy name, which wee ought not to use without great reverence, to bee dishonoured, but his righteous soule must be vexed thereat. It was this which did strike so deepe into David, and vexe him so sore: See the coherence which hee
Psal 69.9. makes in the same verse; For the zeale of thine house hath eaten

eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are falne upon me. How free hee was from anger and revenge in his owne particular caſe, may appeare by his carriage when Saul had a quarrell againſt him: For though Saul had ſo highly offended God by his folly, in offering a burnt offering, for the which hee was told that his kingdome ſhould not continue; God having ſought a man after his owne heart: And againe hee rebelled by diſobedience, in ſparing Agag, & the beſt of the ſpoile; at which time the Prophet threatned him, that his kingdome ſhould bee rent away from him. And though David was anoynted by Samuel,

el, and might have ſet upon Saul, when hee cut the skirt of his robe privily; and another time might have ſuffered Abiſhai to ſmite him, and make him ſleepe his laſt; yet hee would not upon theſe pretences put forth his hand againſt him, but lamented at his death, and calls to the daughters of Iſrael to weepe over Saul. But here, when God was contemned, he was pricked to the heart, and his marrow was turned into the drought of Summer: He was upon the racke, and all his bones were broken, when he heard their evill ſpeeches, whereby they infected the ayre, and poyſoned their owne ſoules. Now between David and moſt men living

in

in theſe daies, there is as great a difference, as betweene the King upon the throne, and the meaneſt ſubject grinding at the mill: Hee had a ſoveraigne command over himſelfe, and was ſlow to anger, not ſinning by wrath, yet moſt ſenſible of malicious words, tending to the diſhonour of God: Whereas many that in Gods cauſe are like dumbe idols, which have eares and heare not; as if it did not concerne them, being never touched with inward compunction, when his name ſhall bee blaſphemed; but will rather give ſome conſent thereunto, as if they were well pleaſed with ſuch lewdneſſe: And yet when their owne reputation

ſhall

shall be brought in question, they will whet their tongue, like a sword, in sharpe invectives; and will whet their swords also, that they may wash off the least disgrace with the bloud of other men: But if God doth whet his glittering sword, and his hand take hold on judgement, he will render vengeance to all those which are of that mercilesse disposition that Cain was, who thought the life of his brother to bee the most acceptable sacrifice.

Deut. 32. 41.

VERSE XI.

Why art thou cast downe, O my soule, and why art thou disquieted within mee? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise

praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.

VVHereas David ſo often repeateth theſe words, we may obſerve the manifold troubles which befall us in this life. Having mentioned his teares, and his baniſhment in the beginning, at the fift verſe he rebukes his ſoule for ſadneſſe; Having rehearſed his other afflictions, he now againe chides himſelfe for this diſtruſtfull heavineſſe: As Peter, though he began to ſinke the firſt time hee went to Chriſt upon the water, Yet he was not thereby diſcouraged from caſting himſelfe into the ſea againe; and then he

Mat. 14. 30.

Iohn 21. 7.

he passed safely to the shoare where Christ was: So though the waves & billowes went over David, when hee hoped to approch unto God by faith, yet here againe hee calls upon his soule, and casting himselfe upon Gods mercy, he arrives at the port of blessednesse: Hee did not overcome these temptations and trialls, at the first assault, nor yet was he wearied with the continuance of them; But whensoever he was molested with any evill, he labours to strengthen his confidence in Gods love, that he may be restored to comfort. As Paul prayed thrice that the messenger of Satan might depart from him: So our Author, shutting up the next Psalme

2. Cor. 12. 8.

Pſalme with the ſame concluſion, doth the third time ſeek to be freed from this thorne in the fleſh, this heavineſſe that was ſo offenſive unto him.

By this we may learne that leſſon, which we ſhall have cauſe to remember, and occaſion to practice, That through much tribulation we muſt enter into the kingdome of heaven: Without are fightings, within are feares. A wounded ſpirit, who can beare? What ſorrow ſo neere, what trouble ſo heavy, as this, when the ſoule ſhall be diſquieted with doubt of Gods love or ſenſe of his diſpleaſure? And yet wee muſt not faint and forſake our aſſurance, but continue

Act. 14. 22. 2. Cor. 7. 5.

nue faithfull unto the death, that wee may receive the crown of life: In afflictions wee muſt not thinke ſome new thing doth come upon us, which hath not beene before: Wee will not compare our ſufferings and trials with thoſe which David endured. Wee may take this one Prophet for an example of ſuffering affliction; yet did hee not caſt away his confidence, but hoped in God: therfore let us alſo hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, untill hee receiue the earely and later raine: let us alſo ſtabliſh our hearts, that wee may bee refreſhed with

Iam 5.7.

Gods

Gods favour. As in water, face anſwereth to face, ſo if wee looke unto the Lord, we ſhall praiſe him for the helpe of his countenance, who is the health of our countenance, and our God. The conſideration hereof may be of ſpeciall uſe and importance in all the caſualties of this life, but chiefly at the time of death, when wee are brought to the king of terrors: when this earthly houſe is diſſolved, we ſhall be conducted to the kings palace; when theſe old garments be laid aſide, we ſhall be arraied in long robes; I ſhall yet praiſe God, yea I ſhall for ever praiſe God, when I ſhall alwayes appeare in his preſence, Who is the health of my

Pro. 27. 19.

Pſal. 42. 5.

Iob 18. 14.

my countenance, who raiſed me from ſickneſſe to a ſound eſtate, who gave me ſtrength after infirmity, who filled me with plenty after adverſity, who revived me with comfort after ſorrow, and who will bring me to life after death; Being then eſpecially the health of my countenance, when hee makes my face to ſhine as the ſunne, by beholding his glory, And doth change this vile mortall corruptible body into a glorious body. The lame man, who was laid at the gate of the temple, looking upon Peter, received ſtrength, and entring into the temple praiſed God: Though now our ſoules be caſt downe, yet if we truſt in the Lord, all our infir-

Act. 3. 4.

infirmities ſhall be cured, & entring into the holieſt place we ſhall bleſſe the name of the Lord for evermore: Then be not diſcouraged with preſent afflictions, let thy hope be ſtedfaſt and ſure: Though in tempeſts ſometimes they cut the anchors & leave them in the ſea, that the men may be ſaved, yet if we let our hope depart from us we periſh. The time of our life is but as ſixe dayes of labour and ſorrow, and in this ſpace we have ſo many nights of quiet and comfort, yea we have an evening before the morning, a time of ſtrength before a time of triall; But in the end there is the eternall Sabbath of bleſſedneſſe, when we ſhall for ever

Act. 27. 40.

Amos 8. 5.

ver magnifie the name of the Lord: Though the carnall man doth with the Sabbath gone, that he may set forth wheate, and falsifie the ballances by deceit; yet let not beleevers make hast by impatience, but waite upon the Lord, knowing that by this difficult ascent we come to sit upon the throne.

FINIS.